A DISCOURSE OF Earthquakes;

AS THEY ARE

Supernatural and Premonitory Signs to a Nation; with a reſpect to what hath occurred in this Year 1692. And ſome ſpecial Reflections thereon.

AS ALSO

On that Security and Aſſurance of Mind, which is attainable in the Light and Power of Religion, under the greateſt Surprizals, and Terrors of Senſe.

WITH SOME

Enquiry upon the Grounds both of our Fears and Hopes, as to the publick State of the Church of Chriſt in this day.

By the Author of the *Fulfilling of the Scriptures.*

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THE PREFACE.

IT is ſure that the great Intent of Religion, is to bring Men unto a near Communion and Intimacy with God, whilſt they are here on the Earth, both by his Word *and* Providences; *and where this End is not deſigned, it is a very low Intereſt that can be made by the Profeſſion thereof: For it may be evident, how the Intellectual Part of Man, when it is in a ſerious and true Exerciſe, muſt tend either to their greateſt Torment, or to an unexpreſſible Joy, when they cannot but ſee that their Good is not in their own Hand, but muſt every Moment be dependent on an inviſible Refuge and Support; ſince Men are no* Statues, *but in the ſolid uſe of Reaſon, muſt have deep Impreſſions, both as to fears and hopes of future Events, and how ſad and*

ſurprizing Changes may be near, in the Publick State of Nations *and* Cities, *as well as of Perſons, when all Humane Refuges and Aſſiſtances will fail; yea, when then the great Lawgiver's Right and Authority to a* Paſſive Obedience, *will be found indiſputable in the way of Judgment, over ſuch, who would not acknowledge the ſame by* Active Obedience, *under a Treaty of Grace. But yet, ſuch is the tender Regard of the Majeſty of God to Humane Race, and to the Work of his own Hand, that in the moſt ſevere, judicial Procedure with a People and* Nation, *he does not ſurprize without previous Warnings* before the Decree go forth, *and hath a time of Patience herein, if ſo be, the Voice of threatned Judgment might be regarded; and whereby ſuch Stroaks, as have at laſt made deſolate, might have been prevented: Tho I find not either in Divine or Humane Record, that any Kingdom or People, did truly meet God in the way of his Wrath, to put a Stop thereto, upon extraordinary premonitory Signs, except*

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that one Inſtance of Nineve. *I know it is no eaſie thing to underſtand* Warnings *from Heaven aright, and to have a clear Interpretation of ſuch Providences, or to diſcern the Approaches of Divine Vengeance, when ſuch tender Intervals of Forbearance, as are uſual betwixt one Step and another thereof, takes off all Fear of a greater Woe that may be to come. There are Two things which may occaſion ſome deep and ſerious Thought about the ſame, with reſpect to this* Juncture of Time *we are now in: The* Firſt *is, as to that Difference which is betwixt extraordinary* Warnings *in the way of a Treaty, and ſuch aſtoniſhing Providences, as are of a predicting Nature, as* preſaging Signs, *and as a* Signal *of Judgment in its near Approach to particular Places, which ſpeaks the Certainty of what is ſignified thereby: This is a* Subject *that may ſurely cauſe matter of great Reflection upon what hath been both of late, and for ſome conſiderable time paſt, made viſible by ſtrange and unuſual Diſcoveries of God this way, both from the* Heavens, and the Earth beneath:

neath: *Nor can it be in the Dark, how ſuch are become then portentous* Signs *and Prognoſtications of future Events; when they ceaſe to affect and* warn, *or to work in a monitory way upon Mens Spirits; when the ſaddeſt of moral Signs does not awaken, nor tend to reclaim; when the Dread and Reverence of God does not accompany the moſt extraordinary Occurences of Providence, but Men thus become rather more hardned; yea, when ſuch unuſual* Signs *meet in an extraordinary Seaſon of Sin, and point as with the Finger thereat; which is a Conjunction of another kind, that hath a more diſmal Aſpect, than all that was ever pretended, or feared from the Planets:* But oh! who ſhall live when God does this, *and does ceaſe to warn any more, after renewed and unuſual Methods he hath taken with this Generation for this end? But there is a* Second *thing to be matter alſo of ſerious Thoughts herewith, for what ends ſuch extraordinary* Signs *may be directed, ſince they never be in vain, when now there ſeems no promiſing Efficacy or In-*

fluence

fluence therewith, on the Spirits of moſt, and are ſo eaſily paſt, as if they had no Commiſſion from Heaven to diſcharge: But ſure then is it that the Majeſty of God will make known, he hath not forſaken the Earth; *ſo that when his Word hath no Regard or Intercourſe with Mens Souls, he will not yet leave them without ſome ſenſible Demonſtration of himſelf, and of a Divine and Inviſible Power above them; as this way he will alſo awake and put his People more on their Watch, and to be on a preparatory Work, whatever Storm may be to blow.*

This Scripture *on which the* following Diſcourſe *is founded, does give a moſt ſingular Account, how far a Chriſtian may be raiſed above his ordinary reach, by a* ſpecial Faith, *in the Power and Evidence thereof, when it can have no poſſible Riſe from any natural Cauſe; yea, as there is a Suppoſal here made of ſuch a prodigious Concuſſion of the* Earth, *as if the Frame of Nature ſhould be diſſolved by ſome* Earthquake, *and is there literally to be underſtood; it did give a ſpecial*

cial Call to ſpeak thereon in the firſt part of this Diſcourſe, *when ſuch a concurrent Call was alſo in the way of Providence thereto, and to offer ſome ſpecial Reflections on what hath in this* laſt Year 1692 *occurred. I know the Publiſhing thereof, might ſeem now too late, tho I hope it may be the more ſeaſonable to revive the Senſe and Remembrance thereof, after ſome others have, (I doubt not) with much Advantage diſcours'd on the ſame Providence, tho I knew not thereof, when this was writ.*

And I had not the leaſt Thought to have touched any thing of that Additional Diſcourſe *which is in the* Cloſe, *if (in the Bleſſed Diſpoſal of the Lord) there had not then been ſome remarkable concurring Providence, which thus put me to ſome deep and ſerious Thoughts on ſuch a* Subject, *and to have my Soul more nearly join'd in therewith, for keeping Sight of the way of the Lord, in ſuch Steps thereof, as needed his ſpecial Conduct and Teaching, in a more than ordinary way.*

A DISCOURSE OF Earthquakes.

Pſal. 46. 1, 2, 3.

God is our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the Earth be removed: And though the Mountains be carried into the midſt of the Sea. Though the Waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the Mountains ſhake with the ſwelling thereof.

IT is one of the moſt adorable Myſteries of Truth, that for an Eternity the glorious God would hide himſelf within himſelf, in that unconceivable Fellowſhip, and Enjoyment of the Bleſſed

Trinity when there was no created Exiſtence. But as ſuch a Reflection muſt be bounded with a Becoming Silent and Humble Admiration, as being too wonderful for us to think on; ſo is it Matter for the higheſt Joy and Exultation of Spirit, that we ſhould have this day ſuch a Being as admits us to ſee and enquire upon the Glory of that Work, which he hath brought forth within time, ſo infinitely becoming the Perfections of the *Deity*; and to have ſo clear a Diſcovery of the ſame, not only in the whole Diſpenſation of Nature and Providence, but as it's more nearly relative to us in the Diſpenſation of Grace, and in the Speciality of that Work that he hath about each of his People in this Militant State; yea, thus to ſee on what Security we are fixed againſt the greateſt Hazards, and fear of future Events: It was on this account that the *Pſalmiſt* here, bears ſo great and wonderful a Teſtimony for God, and to the ſureneſs of their State, who have him to be their alone Refuge, and truſt in the moſt extream Caſe.

This is indeed a *rare paſſage of Scripture*, and does imply, 1. A *Suppoſal* of that which is one of the moſt tremendous Providences that can occur, *a Concuſſion of the*

the Earth, whereby the whole frame of Nature would ſeem not only to be ſhaken, and caſt into a trembling poſture, but turned out of its place: And there is nor eaſon to account a *Metaphor* that the *Pſalmiſt* makes uſe of, but to be taken in the *literal Senſe*, as that which is ſuppoſable may occur to the moſt excellent on the Earth. But 2. What is more wonderful here, is a *Suppoſal* made of ſuch a Stupendous *Earthquake* by this Man of God, as though it were preſent and viſible to his Senſe, without any *Trepidation or Earthquake on his Soul*, to ſhew what a pitch ſometimes the *Faith of Aſſurance* may be at, and what Relief thus is attainable amidſt the greateſt Terrors of Senſe, in the Light and Power of Religion, as is above the Comprehenſion of Nature. He was one who had made a great Tryal of God, and of Acquaintance with him by inward Converſe, and does thus ſpeak in a *Dialect* that's not intelligible to ſuch who may pretend the higheſt Flight by Reaſon in the Searches of Nature.

I ſhall offer ſome *Propoſitions* for a more clear Underſtanding and Improvement of this *Scripture*; the *firſt whereof is this*, That the moſt ſelect and eminent of the Saints may meet with ſuch a Trial to their Faith

of the ſame nature as is here mentioned, of ſome extraordinary *Concuſſion of the Earth*, as would ſeem to overturn the ſetled Courſe and Conſtitutions of Nature: It is true, ſuch a ſtrange Providence is not ſtill alike in the ſame manner or meaſure, but ſometimes is with the moſt tender Reguard, as a *premonitory Warning and Sign only*, when at other times it is with the greateſt Terror of an *immediate deſolating Judgment*.

That a *Suppoſal* of this kind may be ſuitable to the moſt endeared Favourites of Heaven, needs be no ſtrange or difficult thing, when it's conſidered how it's by no *external Providences* the Lord hath deſign'd the *more ſpecial Diſcoveries of his Love* to his People, and that no Tryal can be ſo aſtoniſhing or at ſuch a pitch, as to exceed the meaſure and allowance of their Grace; but that the *Expence* this way be ever proportioned to their Receipts, and *Meaſure of Faith*; yea, how it is to the moſt diſmal *Tryals and Extremity* the Lord hath reſerved the *greateſt Experiments of his diſtinguiſhing reſpects to Chriſtians*, and where his leading into the one by an immediate Conduct, hath been made ſo obſervable to make way for the other, and ſome more extraordinary appearance of himſelf in ſuch a caſe.

It is not needful to inſiſt on any Concurrence of natural and occult Cauſes, that may be in ſo ſtupendous a Providence, when ſuch Difficulty and Contradiction is to be ſeen amongſt the late Writers, and ſuch as have made the greateſt ſearch upon this Head; and is ſo *conjectural and problematick a thing*, to know what Influence herein the Sun may have, *or Subterraneous Fires, as* Deſcartes *ſpeaks; or mineral Vapours and Irruptions of Winds, penned up in the Caverns and Bowels of the Earth*; ſo dark is the Judgment that is on ſuch an amazing *Phenomenon*, though it fall in within the *Sphere of Nature*, when it is ſo viſibly *preternatural*, beſides the Courſe thereof. But it's a remarkable Reflection which *Ariſtotle* makes, ſpeaking upon this very Subject, that they muſt be bruitiſh and ſtupid who are not deeply affected with ſo amazing a thing as an Earthquake, not only upon the Hazard, but as to the Original and Cauſe thereof; yea, whatever ſubſerviency the Majeſty of God may make of inferiour Cauſes in ſuch Providences, when he does in ſo ſtupendous a way appear; yet it calls us to a deep and tremendous Senſe hereof, as his alone Work.

But ſince this is a *Subject* of ſuch Weight, and what may juſtly cauſe great Thoughts

of Heart in the preſent day, I ſhall ſpeak a little to ſome ſpecial *Enquiries* hereon. The *Firſt* is this, on what *clear and infallible Grounds ſuch an aſtoniſhing Concuſſion of the Earth by an Earthquake, ſhould be reckoned as a divine Sign, and to have a ſupernatural Cauſality in directing the ſame to a Nation, and ſome particular place more than to others*; for giving Light thereto. 1. It cannot poſſibly be denied that ſuch as are *Sacred Signs*, and expreſly *foretold in the Scripture* to take place, muſt have a *divine and ſupernatural Cauſality* for accompliſhing the ſame, that go above all *inferiour or ſecondary Cauſes*, and can have no dependance thereon. 2. It's ſure alſo, how this ſtupendous Providence is in a peculiar way reſerved by the Lord to be a *Demonſtration of himſelf* to the World, in the *greatneſs of his Power and more immediate Preſence*, by making that which he hath ſetled and made firm in it ſelf, not only to ſhake, but cleave aſunder; to ſhew his abſolute Dominion over the moſt ſetled Conſtitutions of Nature. Thus did he in ſuch a way cauſe the Earth to rent in *two, and ſwallow* Dathan *and* Abiram, to ſet up ſuch a ſtupendous Sign of Judgment hereby, where Nature could have no Concurrence; yea, in this way, though in a *promiſſory Senſe* did

did the Lord give ſo extraordinary a *Demonſtration of himſelf and of his immediate Preſence upon that marvelous Effuſion of the Spirit*, Act. 4. 31. when he cauſed the Houſe and Earth to ſhake underneath, both to ſeize their Spirits with a more deep Fear and Reverence, and as a *Sign* that he would make the Nations to ſhake and tremble before his divine Power by the *Goſpel*. Yea, in the ſame manner did he bear Teſtimony to the *Divinity of Chriſt in his Sufferings*, by ſuch a tremendous Earthquake, as an immediate and ſupernatural Sign; in which ſenſe through the *Scripture* as it is ever given, as an extraordinary appearance of God for ſome ſpecial end, ſo it's unqueſtionable, the greateſt *Commenter* we have on the *Scripture*, is that which is writ by the Finger of God himſelf in his Work. 3. It is with an undeniable Evidence, we ſee a ſupernatural Influence and Cauſality in ſuch a Providence, hath in all Ages been matter of ſolemn Obſervation upon theſe remarkable Events have followed ſuch a *Sign*; ſo as in the moſt judicious Records of *Hiſtory*, we do rarely find the one mentioned without reſpect to the other: Thus *Joſephus* does moſt punctually relate theſe *Earthquakes*, that did ſo nearly preſide the Deſtruction

of *Jeruſalem*, and the Expiration of the judaical State, as they were predicted by our Lord himſelf, *Matth.* 24. 7. 4. Yea, it's beyond queſtion how ſometimes ſuch *Earthquakes* fall out with theſe *tremendous Circumſtances*, and clear Evidence of an immediate divine Appearance; as ſerves a Conſtraint herewith, on a *natural Conſcience*, to ſee and acknowledge a *ſupernatural Cauſe*, and that they have ſome extraordinary Commiſſion; ſo as it's not poſſible then for the worſt of Men, to keep off the Terror and Impreſſion of an *inviſible God*. And we ſee little what Intereſt *the Miniſtry of the Angels* hath herein, who have ſurely a more peculiar Delegation and Service in ſuch extraordinary Acts of Providence. 5. As it's needful to underſtand the *Rule of Providence*, e're we can diſcern aright the *Seals* appended thereto, ſo is it evident that a great and ſtupendous *Earthquake* is foretold to be one of the *ſtrange Events of the laſt Trumpet*; which muſt aſſuredly take place in theſe laſt times, and have a literal Accompliſhment: And though its Appearance then will be ſomething we may judge of an extraordinary kind, with ſome aſtoniſhing Marks of Judgment; yet is the intent of that *Prediction* clear herein, that when there is any appearance of God this way, it calls

calls the World to a very ſolemn and awful regard of the ſame, and for ſome Correſpondent acts of Reverence and Homage, as is ſuitable to a Providence whereon he does put ſo ſignal an Impreſs of his Terror and Greatneſs. But it were well if Mens Spirits were more prepared and inclinable, not only to entertain any ſuch Intimation with Reverence and Fear of the Divine Majeſty, but to improve the ſame for a greater ſtrengthning of their own Faith of his glorious Being, and of the Divinity of his Word, when it is alſo directed for ſuch an end.

A *Second Enquiry* upon this *Subject* and of great Uſe, is what may be more ſpecially judged as the Grounds of any ſuch *extraordinary Warnings and Signs to a Nation*, where God hath clearly revealed his Counſels and Judgments by his Word, and of his making uſe thereof. Though here the Soveraignty of his Will ſhould both ſilence and ſubject our Spirits in ſuch a caſe, yet there can be no Darkneſs therein, to any of a ſerious and judicious Spirit, when they ſee, 1. Such a ſuitable Congruity therewith, to that Tenderneſs which the Son of God hath to Mankind, and to Kingdoms and Nations in his Government of the World, that he will not only ſpeak

by

by his *Word*, but go to the utmoſt, by more *extraordinary Warnings* of ſome great and unuſual Stroak of Judgment e're it come, ſo as nothing may be wanting either to reclaim, or render ſuch a People unexcuſable: And it hath a moſt ſad and fatal Aſpect, if this hath no ſuitable Impreſſion in the preſent day. 2. This can be no dark or ſtrange thing, when the times we are in, are ſuch, that the *Honour and Glory of the Godhead* is intereſted to appear in ſome unuſual manner before Men, when no Application of Light to the Judgment, either from his Words or Works, in an ordinary way does prevail, when his *Name* is in ſo viſible a way blaſphemed, and all wherein he has placed his *Name* of ſo low a regard with this Generation. 3. Yea, may not yet ſome more ſtrange and immediate Appearance to this Generation be expected, when ſuch a viſible Tendency now is to *ſacrifice to natural Cauſes*, whatever hath the greateſt Evidence to bring near an affecting Senſe of the *Deity* unto Mens Conſcience; and to account it a ſmall thing to arraign and ſubject the greateſt of his Works to the Comprehenſion of their dark and limited Reaſon; and that their Wiſdom hath ſuch a Dominion and Influence on future Events,

Events, as they can *give Law to Providence*, and lay *Wagers* on what the next day is to bring forth: Oh! may not ſome unuſual Application be yet more than expected, to let Men know they are under the Dominion of that God, who can in a Moment, break the moſt promiſing Means and Meaſures taken by Human Counſel, by one touch of his Hand; and what hath been thought moſt infallible in the courſe of Humane Affairs. 4. And may it not be feared, that when theſe are ſo rare, who *tremble at the Word and Threatnings of an inviſible God*, they ſhould meet with ſuch awakening *Signs*, as cauſe the *Earth to tremble* beneath? which in the very Nature thereof, is ſuited to beget an awful and trembling poſture of Spirit, and let us ſee how every Moment it is dependant on Heaven, and in the Reverence thereof, that the Earth does not rent and ſwallow Men up. But it is clear alſo that extraordinary Appearances of God, not only in Judgment, but in the way of Grace, have been moſt diſcernable, when things have come to an Extremity in the Tryals of Chriſtians, and when their Faith and Patience have been ready to be overſet by Diſappointments, and contrary Appearances, anſwerable to that of *Iſa. Now will I*

ariſe

ariſe, now will I be exalted, now will I lift up my ſelf, ſaith the Lord.

A *Third Enquiry*, That I humbly judge is of Concern here, is *what ſuitable and ſafe Application may be made of ſuch extraordinary Providences, to the preſent Day and Place we are in*; ſince it is requiſite that any Impreſſion of Fear on ſuch an account, be fixed on ſolid and rational Grounds, and we be not affrighted with Shadows, but according to that Evidence they bear of being ſupernatural Signs and Forewarnings, to have an anſwerable Senſe thereof; on which account, as to a clear and applicatory Judgment in ſuch a caſe, I ſhall yet further offer a few things to be conſidered for this end. 1. That when ſomething aſtoniſhing and unuſal, above any Influence of natural Cauſes, is given to be a *premonitory Sign* to a Nation or People, and hath an extraordinary Call with it, it does ſurely ſpeak there is ſome more than ordinary Piece of the Work of God than in bringing forth there, and on a near Approach; yea, that it is on ſome great and important Ground, when the Lord does this way appear. 2. It is of undoubted Evidence which we muſt peremptorily hold by, that where the Majeſty of God takes an unuſual way to awake and warn

warn a People, they must either answer the same, or else they are infallible Prognosticks of Wrath and Judgment, and some dismal Night coming on: Nor can any *Sign* be more mortal than this, that Men *will not consider the Work of God, or regard the Operation of his Hand,* when it hath unavoiadble Evidence to be his alone Work. 3. There may be a clear and infallible Application of what's more extraordinary in any Appearance of God to a Nation, when such Forewarnings have most immediately gone before some astonishing Judgment, on a People who have not been under more aggravating Circumstances of Guilt; yea, not comparable to the height that is this day in our case: Since such *Precedents* of the Severity of Judgments in one place, are undoubtedly given to be a *premonitory Sign* to another. 4. Yea, when there is some more singular *Conjunction, and reiterating* in a successive way of such *awakening Signs,* it then hath not only a distinct Sound, but a loud Cry of some near and immediate Approach of Judgment, and that it may come upon the *last Call.* I know it is one of the greatest things of practical Religion, that needs a near intercourse with God, to have any such *Application* brought near to Mens Souls,

Souls, both in order to fear, and to account alſo the more immediate Appearances of his Power and Workings, as a matter of their greateſt Joy, that the ſenſe of a Deity might thus more ſtrongly work on ſuch a Generation: But oh! how ſad a Token is it, when ſuch are not only rejected, but have a ſiniſtrous and falſe Application made of the ſame; and to ſee the Earth trembling at the near Approaches of divine Wrath, when ſuch as dwell thereon, have no fear of this kind, as Habac. 3. 10. *The Mountains ſaw thee and they trembled, the overflowings of the Water paſſed by, the Deep uttered its Voice*; but ſays the *Prophet* there, *Was the Lord diſpleaſed againſt the Rivers? Was his Anger againſt thoſe Elements*, &c. No, it was againſt Humane Race, and given to be a Sign thereto.

But there is a *Fourth Enquiry*, which comes more cloſe and near to us on this *Subject*, to know what Evidence ſuch *late extraordinary Providences do bear*, as was at *Jamaica*, June 7. *and here*, September 8. *to be the alone Work of God in ſuch an immediate and unuſual manner*, and to go forth on a *ſpecial Commiſſion to* England, *and to this great and renowned City of* London; *yea, the whole Iſland:* For Anſwer thereto, I muſt crave

leave

leave with humble Sobriety, to offer *ſome Reflections on both*, according to the expreſs Signature and Impreſs, they bear not only of an extraordinary Appearance of God herein, but of his Counſel and Intent in this day.

1. As to that *tremendous Stroak on* Jamaica, we cannot but ſee 1. Its being directed to a place where the whole *Country was purely Engliſh* in its Intereſt and Inhabitants, and thus a part of the ſame Nation, though at a diſtance; ſo that it can be no more evident that ſuch a ſtrange Stroak was real and no imaginary thing, than that it hath a proper Aſpect in a *monitory way on this Iſland*, and ſet up as a *publick Beacon and Monument of Judgment* in this reſpect, to ſhew how *terrible a thing it is to fall immediately into the Hands of the Living God*, when a People may ſeem moſt ſecure from all humane Power, yea, that there can be Safety on the Earth, where their Adverſary is above them, and is God. 2. We ſee its being directed alſo with a ſpecial Commiſſion to *that one place*, which alone was the moſt flouriſhing, populous Part of the whole Country; and thus made the *Scaffold* on which ſo dreadful an Execution of Judgment was acted, as did in *Two Moments, ſwallow up near* 2000

of

of its Inhabitants, whilſt no part elſe of the *Iſland* had any ſuch dreadful Effects; and was this a contingent and caſual thing only, if Men do but excerciſe Reaſon herein. 3. This as it's publickly known, was after ſome remarkable Forewarnings, given by a *trepidation of the Earth* there, a ſhort time before, though in that manner, and with ſuch tenderneſs then, as might ſhew a holding of the hand of Judgment, even when it was *lifted up*. 4. It's yet further remarkable as I find it related from ſome who dwelt in that place, that no Inſtance of traditional Conveyance, was before ever known there, not only ſince the *firſt engliſh Plantation*, but under *the Spaniſh Power*; ſo as in that ſenſe as *Moſes* ſpoke, *Numb.* 16. 13. *The Lord did thus work a new thing in ſuch a place of the Earth*, as it's thus circumſtantiate. 5. But that which may moſt direct our Eyes to ſee an immediate Appearance of God herein, and a Cauſality above Nature, was, as is by all acknowledged, when ſuch *a prodigious height of Impiety and Wickedneſs ſeem'd to have filled up its full Meaſure*, and no ordinary means could reclaim; ſo as the Holy God upon the Honour of his Juſtice and Government, was thus intereſted to put ſo aſtoniſhing a Mark of his Severity and Wrath on the ſame,

and

and make known what one Day and Hour, may at laſt bring forth on a *City and Country* after a long Forbearance, when it is leaſt expected or feared.

But it is on this *laſt Sign and extraordinary Concuſſion by an Earthquake, that was in the* 8th. *of* September, I muſt offer a few *Reflections* further, that hath come nearer to our Senſe, with ſo unuſual an Aſpect. 1. That it was given in ſo near a Conjunction with the former, and with ſuch Evidence as the Lord ſpeaks to *Moſes*, Exod. 4. 8. *If they will not hearken to the Voice of the firſt Sign, they may yet hearken to the Voice of the ſecond*; yea, when the firſt had the leſs Influence, that it was ſo remote in its Diſtance, this comes and ſpeaks in that manner as Jeremiah, *I am a God near at hand, and not a far off only.* 2. If we look on the manner of it, it is ſo aſtoniſhing, as is unaccountable to all Humane Reaſon, that ſo diſcernable a *trepidation* ſhould be in one Room in the ſame Houſe, and not in another, as was certainly known; yea, in ſo diſtinguiſhing a reſpect, that it was moſt perceptible and terrifying to one in the ſame Room and not to another; tho' both in the ſober Exerciſes of Reaſon. 3. And whence ſhould ſuch a Correſpondence in *this great Sign* have a Riſe, that almoſt

in the ſame Hour it made the Earth to tremble at *London*, and in the *Sea-Coaſts* there, in ſo aſtoniſhing a manner, and then alſo give the ſame *Signal* and Warning through the *whole Low-Countries, with other adjacent parts of Germany*, when ſo great an Extent of Sea lyes betwixt the ſame; ſince it is not poſſible that in the ordinary courſe of Nature, the *Influence of any ſubterraneous Fires or Vapours, ſhould have ſo immediate a Conjunction with Places ſo vaſtly remote*, and ſeparate from other by ſo great an Extent of the Sea. I find ſome famous Searchers into natural Cauſes, writ that an *Earthquake* is ſimply impoſſible in Nature, to be of any univerſal Extent. 4. And though we read in the *Engliſh Hiſtories* ſome ſtrange extraordinary Inſtances that did occur of ſuch a kind in *Queen Elizabeths Reign* at *London* in the Year 1580, at *Marcly Hill* in *Herefordſhire* in the Year 1571, where it removed it ſelf from the place where it ſtood, and travelled to another place; as alſo a Prodigy of the ſame kind, which was in *Dorſetſhire* 1582, yet was none of theſe, in the leaſt, of ſuch a Nature as this, or in any reſpect parallel thereto; but were reſtricted only to particular Bounds, tho' they were then matter of great Obſervation

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tion in their day: But I humbly judge if the moſt exact Search were made into *Hiſtory both Modern and Ancient*, under ſuch Circumſtances, no Inſtance ſo ſtrange and unaccountable, as to any natural Cauſes herein will be found. 5. And what a State ſhould we have been in, if it had continued but *Three Minutes more?* Or was there any Humane Counſel or Power, that could either prevent or reſtrain the ſame in the leaſt, of its going ſo far and no further, but we might ſee at once, our Hazard and Deliverance ſet in our ſight, from an inviſible Power.

But as all the Works of God, even ſuch as fall under the Obſervation of each day, ſhould be matter of ſpecial regard; ſuch wherein his Appearance is more extraordinary, calls for ſome greater Advertence and enquiry about the ſame. I muſt therefore offer a few *Reflections* further on this late aſtoniſhing Providence. 1. That as it was now *Ten Years ago* ſince the Lord gave a *Sign* in an unuſual manner from the *Heavens above*, by that great and remarkable *Comet in the Year* 80, ſo now after ſuch an Interval of Patience to this Generation he hath given a *Sign* of another kind, *which is from the Deep beneath*, that comes more near to us, anſwerable to that of

Iſa. 7. where we may ſee how it is moſt eminently in theſe two ways the Lord does appear, when he is to give *ſome great and ſignificative Sign to the World* of *unuſual Events*; and as nothing can bring more Terror therewith, than an Appearance of ſuch a kind, ſo needs it not be ſtrange that this day, when the Earth hath ſo near a Reſemblance to the Infernal State, why this ſhould be from *beneath*, and have ſo dreadful an Aſpect. 2. Though there might be cauſe why ſuch a *Concuſſion of the Earth* ſhould cauſe juſt Fears and Tremblings of Heart, yet does it exceed all Humane Comprehenſion ſuch a *Circumſtance* herewith, which was ſo univerſally noticed *of its affecting the Head with a ſenſible Giddineſs*, even before they did apprehend, and underſtood any thing of *an Earthquake*; which was ſo obvious to the moſt judicious Obſervers, that it ſeemed as if an *Apoplectick Diſtemper* had ſeized upon them, without any known Cauſe for the ſame: This I have found ſo general a *Remark*, as I could not paſs it over, though without any Application elſe, but that no natural Cauſe can be ſuppoſable herein. 3. And if we regard the manner of this *Sign*, as it is directed to ſuch a time we are in, and in ſo ſtrange an Extent thereof, may it not

alſo

alſo as with clear and articulate Voice be underſtood, that what *is ſignified thereby will prove matter of Trembling and Aſtoniſhment*, and may cauſe a Trepidation in theſe *weſtern parts of Europe* anſwerable thereto, ſo as to *ſhake the moſt ſetled Conſtitutions of Nations*, if ſo ſolemn a Call be not regarded. 4. And though it might ſeem a ſtrange *Criticiſm*, yet I hope not unſuitable to be noticed, that this *laſt Warning was given in the* 2d. *Week of* September, as directed to revive the Senſe, and Remembrance of what had been ſo highly remarkable to this *great City* in the *firſt Week thereof*, and with a *new Call* tho in a moſt tender premotory way, but with that Evidence, as we are ſure was immediately from Heaven; only let me add herewith, that's ſure Divine Threatnings, and the moſt *tremendous Warnings to Kingdoms and Nations*, are in their primary Intention, deſign'd to keep off Men from the Judgments threatned, and not to be gazed at for a matter of Talk and Report: But oh! if the furtheſt Meaſures of this kind can have no weight to anſwer the Intent hereof: It is ſure that God will be known to be God this day unto *Britain*, and before this Generation, by ſuch an Evidence and Demonſtration, as will at laſt work effectually.

But having now ſo far touched theſe two *extraordinary Signs* that have ſo lately occurred, I muſt for the ſame end point at a *Third*, as ſo nearly contemporating with the former, though it may be feared, is gone out of ſight and forgot, when the Bitterneſs of Death ſeems to be paſt, but did cauſe ſuch Fears in the preſent time, and Conſternation of Mind: *It is that unuſual and aſtoniſhing Rain, which in theſe parts, through moſt of the Summer continued*, when thus theſe ſweet Influences from Heaven by moiſtning Showers, to reſtore and ripen, were in that manner changed to be deſtructive, when we might ſee the Heavens with ſo extraordinary an Aſpect, as it were mourning from above over the Earth, *if hereby Men would be awakened to the Fear and Dread of that God in whoſe hand both our Breath and Bread is*; yea, when it was come to that Extremity in its continued Courſe, as threatned to make void the *Harveſt*, and when but *one Week almoſt ſeemed to ſtand betwixt us and ſuch an unavoidable Stroak*; when no Humane Counſel or Power, could ſave the Nation from periſhing in ſuch a caſe: It was then the Sovereign God did ſtay his hand, and with an eminent Teſtimony of his Tenderneſs, not only ſhut up the Clouds, but

gave

gave ſuch a *Compenſation* by a moſt ſerene deſirable Seaſon, as might recover in a ſhort time, what the former Months had ſpoiled, and ſeemed in an ordinary way to Mens Thoughts, irrecoverable.

But I ſhall ſhut up any further inſiſting on this *Subject*, with a ſhort Touch only at *ſome Improvement hereof for theſe ends. Firſt to a ſolid fixing of our Judgment and Light about the ſame*, there is nothing more amazing and dreadful to the Spirit of many in this day, than any *ſupernatural Appearance in the Events of Providence*, as renders the Senſe and Impreſſion of an inviſible God, and his Dominion over *ſecond cauſes*, to be unavoidable, and on this Account, as theſe ſeem to be in ſuch a Fear upon the *Truth and Exiſtence of Devils*, ſince their Faith hereof, muſt needs bring them to the ſame with the *Devils, to believe and tremble*: So is it in this caſe, Men are ſo much on the Rack how to ſolve all by *natural Demonſtration*, that may darken any immediate Appearance of God; as *Jannes* and *Jambres* in *Egypt*, until at laſt they were conſtrained to ſee and acknowledge it was a Divine Power alone they oppoſed themſelves to; but ſuch as will peruſe what the moſt *judicious of modern Philoſophers* ſpeak on this *Head*, may

ſee how dark and perplexed their Inquiſition is hereon, and how ſtrait Bounds they are penned up in, whilſt they jointly confeſs that an *Earthquake* is by no natural motion of the Earth, but is impetuous and violent, that moves contrary to the ſetled courſe of Nature, and fixedneſs of the Earth; but that ſome extraordinary Stop and Obſtruction is herein, and when they come to fix on the particular Cauſe hereof, think it moſt probable to be either *ab aqua, à flammis ſubterraneis, vel ab halitu:* But if they will riſe higher upon another *Principle, to give a true Idea of Nature*, they muſt then ſee alſo how it is acted by God as his *Inſtrument*, to do whatever he will, and that the *Motions of all inferior Cauſes* muſt be ultimately reſolved, both on an immediate Divine Concurrence to their working, and on his directing Counſel to anſwer his Intent; ſince as the *Eye of God is ſtill on the whole Circle of the Creation in its Motions*, ſo is his Dominion over the *deep and darkeſt Caverns of the Earth*, to move upon his Call; which can never be ſubjected to the Rule of natural Cauſes. It is true, that in the ordinary courſe and procedure of Providence, the only wiſe God hath a ſpecial Reſpect to the order of inferior Cauſes, and his own Ordinati-

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on herein, and does thus exerciſe his Dominion over the World, and the Motion of things there, according to their *particular nature* wherein he hath fixed them; *but when ſublunary things ſtep out of their natural Courſe*, and do either move againſt or above their own *Nature*, it is ſurely then upon a ſupreme Determination for a great end, and ſome notable Step of Providence is to be underſtood herein; yea, it is moſt conſpicuous in the way of God, when great Events of what's foretold in the Scripture, are in bringing forth as to any piece of his Work, wherein he deſigns ſome higher diſcovery of himſelf to Men, that it is when *Secondary Cauſes* and the whole concourſe of Nature would ſeem moſt to controul the ſame; and in this preſent caſe, if with a ſerious and prepared Mind, Men do conſider theſe *two late Earthquakes* under their proper Circumſtances, then it is not poſſible but they muſt ſee them to be ſuch Events, as cannot poſſibly be aſcribed to another Cauſe, than an immediate Divine Power exerted in the ſame.

There is *a Second Improvement*, which on this *Head* is now called for, *to have our eyes thus carried up towards God by ſerious Obſervation*: I know this is not eaſily attained

tained, to be in a due capacity and poſture to converſe with him this way, wherein lyes one of the neareſt Intercourſes betwixt Heaven and our Soul within time; but it is of great uſe to know aright where the intent of *judicious Obſervation* on ſuch an account ſhould be moſt fixed, as 1. On the *immediateneſs of ſuch Acts of Providence to be from God alone*, as can be aſcribed to no created Power, which is a diſcovery that comes not with more Terror to a profane World, whoſe Study is to *live without God therein*, than with unſpeakable Joy it meets theſe of a ſerious Spirit for a more full eſtabliſhment of Faith, and to ſee it with that Evidence, as makes it unavoidable to terminate their eyes otherwiſe than on God alone herein, *Deut.* 32. *See now, I even I am he, and there is no God, elſe; I kill and make alive, I wound and I heal*, &c. 2. It is then our *Obſervation* is ſuitably fixed, when it reſpects *the clear Impreſs of Divine Truth on any extraordinary Step of his way*, no leſs than of his *Power*, ſince as his Work is ever anſwerable to his *Being, and the Perfections of his Nature*, ſo is the outgoings of his Truth, and Faithfulneſs herein to be intenſly obſerved; who does rule and govern the World according to theſe eſtabliſhed Laws and Conſtitutions

of

of his revealed Truth. 3. It is eſſentially requiſite alſo to conſider and ſee ſuch Providences as are more extraordinary, *under theſe Circumſtances, which moſt remarkably attend the ſame.* It being ſure how great a weight *one Circumſtance* may have to render a Providence in ſome ſingular way, to be both inſtructing and comforting, which otherwiſe would not work in that manner. Thus did the *Ruler* ſo exactly inquire and obſerve *at what Hour it was when his Son recovered,* and found it anſwer to that very time when Chriſt had given him the aſſurance thereof. It is herein one of the great Duties of our day lyes, and I am perſwaded that *great things for Obſervation,* do yet wait upon this time. *Providence hath been a long Teacher to* Britain, and it uſeth to be the *laſt Teacher* that is made uſe of, *and the laſt way that the Spirit of God does ſtrive with a People or Nation, before approaching Judgment:* We have ſeen it *go by on the right hand* in moſt *ſingular diſpenſations of Grace and Mercy to theſe Nations;* as alſo upon the *left hand in extraordinary Acts of Juſtice,* yet have we little ſeen or perceived to this day, the moſt ſpecial Intent of the Lord herein: But ſince I have ſpoken more expreſly thereto elſewhere, I forbear to touch it further; only

only *this Improvement further*, might be ſuitable on ſuch a *Subject*, to impreſs Mens Spirits with the Fear and Dread of *walking contrary to Providence, eſpecially in any more extraordinary Diſcoveries of God this way*, ſince this is the higheſt Contempt and Oppoſition upon the Earth, to his Providential Government, and does in an unuſual manner, haſten and prepare ſuch for the laſt Stroak: This ſeems to be one of *the Signs of our time*, that hath a ſad Reſemblance to theſe in the *Primitive times*, 2. Pet. 2. who turned divine Patience to be a matter of Scoff, and ſaid, *Where is the Promiſe of his coming*, ſince we ſee things continue yet as they were, and have yet outlived many *threatning Tokens, and Preſages of Judgment?* But it is uſually ſeen, that ſuch who have looked on *premonitory Signs* with the greateſt Confidence, and have counted any ſerious regard thereto, to be a ſuperſtitious Weakneſs, have been beyond all others, ſeized with the greateſt Terror and Amazement, upon a ſurprizing Stroak: *A reverential Fear and Dread of Divine Warnings*, and of the evil day, is moſt highly becoming ſuch who may have the greateſt Security of Mind, as to their own perſonal Lot therein; ſuch as *Habac.* 3. 16. *When I heard this, my*

my Belly trembled, my Lips quivered, &c. that I might reſt in the day of Trouble.

A *Second Propoſition* that hath the ſame clear Evidence with the former from this Scripture is this, "That ſuch an *Aſſurance of* "*Faith* is attainable here on the Earth, as "can bear out, and ſecure the Soul of a "Chriſtian in a preſent *Extremity*, and a-"midſt the greateſt Terrors of Senſe, when "there is no poſſible Support from Nature, "or things ſeen in ſuch a caſe. To this does the *Pſalmiſt* here bear a moſt clear Witneſs. I confeſs it is one of the moſt aſtoniſhing Myſteries of our Religion, which is wholly unaccountable to the Spirit of this World; and it hath been matter of Wonder to me, in how ordinary a way ſuch a *Subject* is oft ſpoken of, and what length is come in the *Notion and Theory*, when ſo little of the experimental Light hereof, ſeems to be found on the Earth in this day: But where it is known in Truth, it is ſurely one of the *greateſt Demonſtrations of God*, and of his immediate Power and working on the Soul in this Militant State, yea, ſuch as may ſupply the room of any *external Miracles* to theſe, who know the ſame; it is a thing of that Nature, as exceeds *the Sphere of all created Power* to work, and goes far above the reach of *Angels* to im-

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part the ſame; but to him only it belongs *who is both the Author and Finiſher of our Faith*; yea, which according to the *out-lettings of his Spirit*, herein makes ſo unſpeakable a difference betwixt ſuch and themſelves to whom it is thus known, how in one time then they are made to differ from another, and where the *Sorrows and Pains of a doubting Heart, about the Warrant of their Hope* is underſtood, it will be then known what unexpreſſible Joy the Truth of ſuch an Aſſurance as we find here in the Text does raiſe, and be as a *Reſurrection from the Dead* in that caſe. It's true ſuch a *particular Confidence and Truſt*, that hath nothing from things ſeen, or on any natural account to fix, cannot bear out in the way of Light only, even on the moſt clear Grounds of a Divine Promiſe herein, but is immediately dependant on that meaſure of the *Spirit of Faith*, which is then given to anſwer to the height and meaſure of their preſent Tryal; but yet it's ſure and unqueſtionable, that ſuch a Faith as is not founded on Appearances, hath a *Ballaſt* as will not be broken by contrary Appearances; and ſince this may look as a very dark and amazing thing, what relates to ſuch ſingular workings of a Chriſtians Faith in an Extremity, I would

ſpeak

ſpeak a few things to be previouſly conſidered in what manner this acts *on the higheſt Principles of inlightned Reaſon*, as well as by *ſupernatural Influence*, and how nothing can be more rationally deduced than ſuch a *Concluſion* which *David* here makes from the foregoing *Premiſes*, ſince it's undeniable,

1. That ſuch a ſweet and abſolute Neceſſity there is for Men to betake themſelves to a Divine *Power and Relief*, only in a preſent exigence of Tryal, when it's ſure that God hath afforded nothing to Man without himſelf in the whole frame of the Creation, to bear up that weight of Dependance and Truſt; ſo as we muſt herein either *ceaſe from Man, whoſe Breath is in his Noſtrils, in the way of Reliance or Part with God:* Nor can any time ever find that to be *Bleſſed*, on which the God of Truth hath by any irrevocable Sentence ſetled a *Curſe*. But this is one of the rare Characters of a Chriſtian, when in ſuch a manner, both his Choice and Confidence does center in God alone, as he is reſolved to truſt him only or none elſe; and to *ly at Anchor* on his revealed Truth, or periſh. The great Former of Heaven and Earth will not bear the empty Name and Shew of being his Peoples hope, when the

the Intereſt and Weight thereof, is laid on things beſide himſelf.

2. It is no leſs demonſtrable and known on this *Head*, that *there is no poſſible reſt or quiet to the Soul of Man* amidſt the Hazards and Terrors of time, but in an intire Dependance and Truſt on an *inviſible God and his being their alone Refuge and Help*, for the *Profeſſion of the only true God, and of our Souls adventuring intirely on him, as the alone Object of our Truſt, is one and the ſame*; and as there is a receding from the one, ſo is there conſequentially from the other alſo, *in denying to him the Glory of his Godhead.* Nothing is indeed more uſual than to ſee Mens Confidence ſtill *Ebb* and *Flow*, according to the viſible poſture of their Affairs, tho it does ſadly evidence ſuch a Truſt and Reliance that hath its greateſt Weight on ſomething elſe than God, however he bear the Name thereof. It is unqueſtionable that the greateſt *Princes and Monarchs, need to have their Dependance no leſs ſetled on God, even for outward Supplies, than the Poor*; whoſe holding hereof, is no leſs abſolutely from him, than thoſe who may be put to live on Humane Charity, and are ever in his Reverence, who can *make the Scarlet to embrace the Dunghill*, when it would ſeem not conceivable

ceivable to Humane Reaſon: It is in this reſpect that one of the higheſt Tryals of Faith is, when external Advantages do moſt abound, and in that Senſe *Riches prove ſo mortal* to thoſe who enjoy the ſame, and as *Chriſt himſelf teſtifies*, is *no leſs hard for ſuch to be ſaved, than for a Camel to go through a Needle's Eye:* It's ſo rare for Men to *have the World in their Hand and not upon their Heart alſo*, as the ground of their Confidence and Truſt.

3. This ſhould be alſo conſidered *for giving Light to the work of Faith* in any extraordinary Tryals, *that it's ſure the utmoſt Perfection of this excellent Grace, not only in its Truth, but in the Degree and Meaſure thereof, is alone in this Life attainable*; ſo, that this is not poſſible to be at a higher Pitch than in this Militant State, or to have another Seaſon for paying in that *Tribute of Glory and Praiſe unto the God of Truth, and to his faithfulneſs*, which is ſo highly called for in the way of believing, but within time only; but, in a more ſpecial way in the greateſt exigence and ſtrait which may be in a Chriſtians caſe, when their *Hope* ſeems moſt viſibly ſtated againſt them. It is in this *Senſe, the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the filling up of the work of Faith in a Chriſtians day*, 2.

Theſſ. 1. 5. as one of the higheſt Deſigns of Providence in the Conflicts of their Warfare, though the ſame *meaſure* in this Work and Tryals hereof, be not allotted to ſome as to others; yea, it is in that reſpect only *James* ſpeaks, Chap. 1. 4. *for the Patience of Faith to have its perfect work*, and to attain this in the utmoſt Degree, ſince it belongs only to this Life.

4. But is it not a *Compenſation to the hardeſt Leſſons of a Chriſtians Confidence and Truſt*, and to the moſt remarkable Hour of Extremity, that we know *God hath reſerved thereto, the moſt immediate and extraordinary Diſcoveries of himſelf, and of his being God alone*, above what is known in the ordinary courſe of his Providence: *Said I, not unto you, if you would believe that ye ſhould ſee the Glory of God*, Joh. 11. which was a ſight that our Lord would not give until all Support in the way of Senſe was taken off, and that it was put beyond the poſſibility of Nature. And it's ſure, *that on ſuch rare Experiment and Tryal of God* in a Chriſtians Life, *and in a caſe where none but God can act*, is of ſuch value, as to be a continued matter of Admiration; yea, is an *earneſt of that kind*, as may bear Evidence to to their Security by a peci al Conduct of Providence in all after-

times

times, when this is enjoyed not only as it's *demonſtrative of the greatneſs of his Power*, but on the *account of his Promiſe*, and as a *Seal* thereto in the way of their Relyance on him.

5. It is ſurely here in the powerful workings of a Chriſtians Faith, in an extraordinary Hour of Tryal, that one of the *great Demonſtrations of the Truth and Excellency of our Religion, is exhibited before the World*: And what a temporal Intereſt does thus accompany the ſame, to ſupport and quiet the Soul? yea, to bear the full Expence of the ſaddeſt afflicting Times, which is not known to the reſidue of Men beſides. For it ſhould be a ſad part, if *any caſe* were of that kind in a Chriſtians Lot, as did exceed a *ſupernatural Relief by Reliance intirely on God*; when nothing beſides in any viſible way is left: But here does the *glory of our Religion with an eminent Brightneſs ſhine forth*, when ſuch as look but at a diſtance, can ſee the *effects thereof*, to afford Quiet and Reſt to the Mind, where it's ſure Nature could give no Aſſiſtance, when Humane Refuge hath moſt viſibly failed, when *Lovers and Friends have ſtood afar off*, and when the *frownings of Providence* have been ſuch, *as if their God was become a Party againſt them*,

and their Eyes made to fail in waiting for his Appearance; yea, as it's ſure all *natural Cauſes muſt ſtill have their Operation and Effects, congruouſly to their proper Nature*, ſo is this alone peculiar to that *excellent Religion* we enjoy in the Truth thereof, to afford a *ſupernatural Vertue and Efficacy therewith*, ſo as to give Reſt and Refreſhment to the moſt perplexed and weary Spirit; and to *commend its Inſtitutions by the influential preſence of the Spirit of God*, as that way whereby *Man* here on the Earth in this viſible Sate, is advanced, and made capable of an immediate and familiar Converſe with an inviſible God, which is one of the Wonders of *Religion*, that might in another manner affect and work upon us, if it were truly believed. Oh! what a *Subject* is this to converſe with, that ſuch a *Demonſtration of the Chriſtian Faith* is known and ſure, as a *vital Intercouſe and Communion* betwixt our *Bleſſed Head*, and theſe who are united to him by Faith here on the Earth; ſo as the *greatneſs of that local Diſtance*, which is betwixt the *third Heavens* and this *lower World*, can be no Lett thereto, when yet the leaſt *moral diſtance by any Impurity and Defilement through Sin* does ſeparate betwixt God and the Soul, and obſtruct this Enjoyment.

But

But ſince this is not conceivable at a diſtance in *what manner a ſurprizing extremity may work, when it's the preſent Object of Senſe*, and Mens Confidence is reſolved intirely on a *ſupernatural Relief*; when it's no Theory or Light in the Judgment can expreſs the ſame as in an experimental way is known; yea, when the *actings of Faith in the Power thereof*, in ſuch a Tryal is ſo rare and wonderful a thing above natural Comprehenſion. *Let me yet offer here ſome of the moſt choice Improvements* that are called for, to the attaining ſuch an *aſſurance and eſtabliſhment of Faith*, when things may come to ſome unuſual Exigence.

1. How then, ſuch whoſe acquaintance with God is not to begin, can have this *Reflection* alone with their Soul, *that they know whom they have believed, and his being able to keep that which was committed to him, and give an account thereof, in a day of Extremity*, 2 Tim. 1. 12. yea, knows the *God of their Truſt* is ſuch, who can extend his Power and Relief unto things that are unconceivable to us, and paſt finding out; who can ſerve himſelf of *means viſibly deſtructive to ſave* in a way contrary to their proper Nature; *whoſe help tarries not for Man, nor waits for the Sons of Men*; and is ever at work to make his

Providence ſerve the Intereſt and Accompliſhment of his Truth to ſuch who have ſetled their Reliance thereon, though the whole viſible ſtate of things, would ſeem to conſpire againſt the ſame; and, can then look up to *that God* (when there may be no look downward, but to cauſe Terror) whoſe *Kingdom and Dominion*, is not only *over all* but can immediately act on their Souls, to quiet and ſettle the ſame, though the Earth about them, ſhould be in a viſible Diſorder and Confuſion.

2. It is then, even under the moſt diſmal Aſpect of external Providences, that ſuch can betake themſelves to *the Certainty of Divine Truth*, and *caſt Anchor on that ground* on which they muſt ſhortly adventure for an eternal State, in that greateſt Tryal at Death: Thus did *Abraham* reſt his Soul when he had ſuch a ſtrange Tide of contrary Providences to ſhake him, and *was not ſtaggered at the Promiſe*, knowing it was given by that God, with whom it *was unpoſſible to lie*; and oh! what a *Hell* ſhould this Earth be, if the Enjoyments of a Chriſtians Faith and Hope, had another Dependance than on God alone, and were in the Reverence of outward things; yea, if there were not ſuch a *Certainty of ſupernatural Evidence and Aſſurance*, as in a Mid-

Mid-night Hour, can bear up againſt the greateſt Contradictions of Senſe.

3. There is this *great Aſſiſtance* to improve in the darkeſt Tryal, what *former acquaintance with the ways of God* hath been attained for diſcerning how the Deſigns and Methods of Grace, do lye towards them, by the light of his Truth: Thus when *preſent Affliction* and *Diſtreſs*, ſeems moſt aſtoniſhing, they are not in the Dark herein, to underſtand what unuſual Meaſures the moſt endeared Favourites of Heaven have had of ſuch a *Tryal*, whilſt they were on the Earth, and that they are upon no ſtrange or unknown ground in ſuch a caſe: They know thus what an *illuſtrious and eſſential part* the moſt *deep diſtreſſes and ſtraits* in a Chriſtians Life, hath in the *great frame of divine Providence*, to bring forth the greateſt Comforts and Mercies thereof; and that according to the meaſure both of their *Grace* and *Services for God*; they muſt expect his way towards them, to go out of the ordinary Road of his dealing with others.

4. It is likewiſe in the moſt diſmal Hour, when all Humane Refuges do Succumb, that ſuch can with Delight, reflect on *that ancient Friendſhip and Entercourſe of Love hath ſometimes been betwixt*

God *and their Soul*, as being ſtill an *undoubted earneſt in their hand*, though they may not have the *ſame inward Senſe* and Evidence therewith, on their *Heart* as formerly: Yea, the ſingular Comfort and Advantage which is in a *judicious Obſervation of theſe more extraordinary Acts of Providence*, that have met them formerly, will be then underſtood, when they come to a ſerious recollecting of the ſame. It's true, the meaſure of ſuch a *Talent* with ſome, may much exceed that of others, whoſe Life hath been filled up with more ſingular Experiments of this kind, what God hath been to them in ſome unuſual way, and in the more immediate Interpoſitions of Providence; yet where ſomething is in any meaſure of ſuch an *Aſſiſtance* for a clear and ſweet review on the ſame, it's not expreſſible how this will work in a *new exigence, when the Comforter indeed brings it to their Remembrance*, it is a *ſtrong Argumentation* that the Spirit of God affords this way to raiſe the Confidence of his People, *in the moſt extraordinary caſe*, Job 5. *He will deliver in Six Troubles, yea in Seven*; by which *in Scripture Style* is to be underſtood a *note of Perfection*, when it comes to the higheſt and moſt extream part of Trouble, that then theſe Experiences were aſſured *Pledges*, that his

his *Power will not fail in the Seventh*, or come ſhort for bringing forth ſo great a Deliverance. It's true, one day may come in a Chriſtians way to heighten *the Tryal* of their Faith, more than all the preceeding part of their Life: But it is no leſs remarkable in the way of Grace, how theſe alſo have been in ſome ſingular manner then *trained* and *ripened* for ſuch an Aſſault e're it came; and, as the greateſt *Paroxiſm of* a *Diſeaſe* is uſual upon the *height of a Criſis*, and when it's on *a turn*, ſo is it experienced, *how aſtoniſhing a darkneſs does oft fall down*, when *ſome eminent Appearance of God* in the way of Comfort and Light to a Chriſtian, hath been moſt immediately near. It is not conceivable alſo until it be tryed what *Satans greateſt Deſign and effort means*, which each of the Saints does once prove in ſome time of their Life, though not in a like meaſure; yea, how ſingular a time this is found to be, *for ſome higher Tryal of God* beyond their former Experience: But it may be a ſtrengthening Remark to our Faith, how the *deſign of thoſe Powers of darkneſs*, are moſt deeply la d againſt the Followers of Chriſt, according to their *room in the Body*, and any more ſpecial Services for him that may be alotted to ſuch. I remember a

Paſſage

Paſſage of *Luthers* in his common places with reſpect to himſelf, very remarkable; *videtur mihi Satanas a pueritia mea aliquid providiſſe in me eorum, quæ nunc patitur, ideo ad perdendum, ad impediendumque me incredibilibus machinis inſanivit, ut ſæpius fuerim admiratus, egone Solus eſſem inter mortales, quem ita peteret.*

5. There is one ſingular Aſſiſtance alſo, that ſuch who have attained ſome near Entercourſe with God in the way of his Truth, have beyond others, in the darkeſt Hour, *by a review on theſe peculiar Promiſes* that have been with the *moſt full Evidence and Seal of the Spirit of Promiſe*, ſometimes enjoyed in a ſenſible Application of the ſame; It was this gave *David* ſo ſtrong an Argument to plead and prevail with God, *Pſal.* 119. 49. *Remember the word unto thy Servant whereon thou cauſeſt me to hope*; and it's clearly in that Senſe it muſt be underſtood, *Heb.* 11. *Of theſe who by Faith obtained Promiſes from God*, being made theirs by ſuch an *immediate Seal and Application*, that gave them as clear an Intereſt therein, as if they were in the *Performance*. And ſurely where the Teſtimony of the *renewed Conſcience* is kept clear herewith, as to the Truth of the *Condition* to which theſe *Promiſes* relate, the very Life and Comfort

Comfort of a Chriſtians Truſt lyes in ſuch a Support, above what's expreſſible, than in an Hour of Temptation.

6. But there is one Improvement further in order to a Chriſtians Faith and Support, in the moſt extreme caſe to conſider, that in a ſhort time he is to make a *Tryal of Faith*, that will be of another Nature than he hath ever known before; and no Tryal within time can be like this, which is *at Death*; when the whole viſible part of Man, muſt be ſhut up in a dark and narrow Grave, which had once the ſpacious Earth to move in, and did enjoy the Light of the ſame, where in one Moment there is a parting with all Intereſt and Comforts in this lower World, and an immediate entry on the Deciſion of their eternal State, which is then irrevocably caſt; where they can have no Intelligence from all who have gone before, what it is to *die*, or what manner of *Sight* that will be, which is *at the firſt opening of thoſe Gates of the Second World, either as to Bleſſedneſs or Torment*; yea, where there can be no poſſible Aſſiſtance from Nature, in the *ſhutting of this dark Gulf*, nor is conceivable by Humane Light, the Way and Manner of that Paſſage; ſo that any *Exigence* which

which may ſeem moſt trying to a Chriſtians Faith here on the Earth, is but as a *Prelude*, and *preparatory part to this laſt ſtep of their Warfare:* And as *Death was in its firſt Conſtitution purely penal*, and is no *natural Accident*, which meets us *not as we are Men*, but *as we are Sinners*, there is no true Support poſſibly attainable then, but in the Vertue and Power of Religion.

But it is now in a more *applicatory way* I muſt yet ſpeak further, with reſpect to ſo great a *Subject*, and what in order to Light hath been held forth thereon.

1. That if Men do not deſign a reſolute Oppoſition to God *in thoſe late premonitory Signs of this preſent Year*, it's not morally poſſible then, to withſtand ſuch *a Concatenation of Evidences*, of *a ſupernatural Diſcovery* thereby; and that they were ſurely *directed with a ſpecial Commiſſion from him*, and Forewarnings of ſuch a kind as are ſuited to the Deſign of Providence in this day; and when there is ſo *little Faith now on the Earth*, with reſpect to any Threatnings of the Word, is it ſtrange though there be ſome *unuſual Demonſtrations of God in the way of ſenſe*, to ſpeak to the World by a monitory Voice: It is true the Lord did never give forth *Miracles, to atteſt before Men the Truth of his Deity, which*

which hath a Witneſs thereto in every Object of Senſe, and from the *whole Conſtitutions of Nature*, yet have theſe been moſt ſpecially directed to awake a more deep, and tremendous Impreſſion of the *Majeſty of God* on Mens Souls, when the Voice of his revealed Truth is not regarded: And there is juſt cauſe to believe that the Deſign of Providence this day, is in another manner now, than in times paſt taking place, to let this Generation know, *That ſurely there is a God who judgeth in the Earth, before whom the greateſt of Men muſt either bow or be broken*; and that the time is not only near, but is now come, *for his taking to himſelf, his great Power to reign*, with another Appearance of his Greatneſs and Terror, than was ever known before in the World. And oh! what muſt be expected to work for greatr Excitements to Fear, and a more awful Senſe of a Supernatural and Divine Power, and of his ſupreme Government over the World, when *no inſtituted means in a moral way*, does anſwer to this end: Tho' it is ſure, if *that Relation we ſtand in to the Deity*, and the Intereſt of our Ingagements to him, with the Greatneſs of our hope from him alone, were taken to Heart, we could not but accountſuch, to be moſt

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deſirable Acts of Providence; yea, rejoyce herein, where he gives the *moſt near and immediate Diſcoveries of himſelf*, when *the Vindication of his glory is ſo viſibly concerned in the ſame*, even though it ſhould cauſe trembling to Humane Senſe, and be at a very dear and expenſive Rate to a ſecure World.

But it is *on another Head* that I muſt more ſpecially inſiſt in a practical way, as to the *great Security of Faith with ſuch a full Reliance on God, as is here held forth in this Scripture*, and to what a Degree the Elevation of a Chriſtians Soul may be thus raiſed with that inward Aſſurance, as can bear out againſt the greateſt Terrors of Senſe: This is *a Demonſtration of God by his immediate working on the Souls of Men, which is wonderful*, and ſhould be matter of great Improvement in the ſaddeſt Tryals of our Warfare, to know in what manner *divine Power is thus exerted*, as can in a Moment, diſpel the moſt extream Fears and Darkneſs on the Soul, ſo as to make Day ariſe, and a Sun ſhine there, when it hath been as Midnight otherwiſe. And ſince this is a *Subject* of ſuch Weight, as the very Life, Comfort, and ſuſtaining of the Soul amidſt the innumerable Hazards and Tryals of time

lyes herein, as to a full Aſſurance and Acquieſcence of the Mind, but the certainty of our Faith that we are thus ſafe, and in ſure Terms with God, it may be needful to anſwer a *few Propoſals* for giving Light thereto.

1. *How we are to apprehend aright, ſo great an Attainment of Grace as this is, and to have our Judgment ſetled, and clear about ſo wonderful an Experiment.* I know it is no ordinary *Standard* or *Example*, what's here held forth in ſuch Aſſurance of *Davids Faith*, when no Suppoſal of Hazard or Extremity, was then too great for the ſame; for, even this great Man of God, had at other times his *low Ebbs and Faintings*, that were as remarkable, as ſuch a Triumph and *High-Spring-Tide*, which we ſee here in the Power of believing; but on the other Hand, this is a ſtrange *Riddle* to the Spirit of the World, and unaccountable to all Reaſon in the Eyes of many who profeſs the ſame Doctrin of our Faith; as if it were ſomething that *alone works in the Power of ſome ſtrong Imagination*, whilſt they *take up Religion in a natural way only*, which *goes not above moral Inducements, and the Power of Free-will*: I muſt therefore ſpeak a little in a ſpecial way, to ſuch a *Propoſal*. 1. That the

the great Deſign of the Goſpel, does moſt eminently ly here, not only to reveal the *Myſtery of Grace and of Redemption, in what Chriſt hath done for us*, but to acquaint us alſo with *the immediate and internal work of Faith on the Soul, which he does work and perfect in us*, as the Author and Finiſher thereof; which was ſo wonderful a thing, as put one of the *Diſciples of Chriſt*, to that ſtrange Enquiry, *Lord how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thy ſelf to us, and not to the World?* and in ſuch a diſtinguiſhing way by inward Evidence and Power. 2. This cannot be underſtood aright, but by ſuch a Diſcovery thereof, *as one of the eſſential parts of that rare Divine Workmanſhip of the new man*, which in its whole Life and Actings, hath no other Subſiſtence, but by *immediate Supplies from Heaven*; and as in one time of a Chriſtians Life, his *Faith* will need a more extraordinary Allowance for Support, than in another; ſo I muſt humbly judge the *preſent time we are in*, is ſuch as needs in a more than ordinary way, ſome clear Underſtanding of *this Myſtery of Faith*, by practical Light, and the vertue thereof in an Hour of Temptation, when the times ſeem to be growing ſo dark, as the Spirits of the moſt Judicious diſcerners of things, are put to Aſtoniſhment, to think

what

what Providence may be bringing forth, when *the Sea-Compaſs ſeems as it were to fail*, and ſo little of any conforting Signs, but for a long time paſt, have been in Paths ſo unt odden, as is not eaſie to trace or find a clear way before us. 3. But this cannot be underſtood as ſome *ſingular and powerful Operation of the Spirit of God*, which upon ſome ſpecial Service for him, may be imparted to ſuch as never knew *his graci-Inhabitation* in their Soul, or what it is to be entred in ſuch a State of *Communion with the Spirit*, as is by his ſetled Reſidence and abiding with them, *John* 14. 17. For ſuch is this myſtery of Faith in the Nature thereof, as it's true acting and work, is not attainable without a *vital influence from Heaven*, and where it's gradual Increaſe and Advance is *made a Reward to frequency in the Acts thereof, and theſe reſolute Adventures and Reliance*, which hath through Grace, been attained on a *Divine Power*. 4. But for a more full underſtanding hereof, it is not poſſibly attainable, without a *ſupernatural Evidence* accompanying the ſame; ſuch whereby it clearly ſees both the Excellency and Certainty of things that are above Senſe, how they are no leſs *ſure than great*: And though the higheſt *Enjoyments of Faith*, whereby the Soul

reſts about things to come, as if they were preſent, hath no ſuch immediate Evidence thereof as they are in themſelves, and are the Objects of our Senſe; elſe they could not *be hoped for, if they were thus ſeen*: Yet it's upon no *Credibility, but upon the higheſt Certainty, that this quieting work of Faith*, is founded: But how this *ſupernatural Evidence does work on a Chriſtians Soul in an Hour of greateſt Tryal, is not expreſſible by Words*, tho' it doth then clear it ſelf in the ſame manner, *as the Day-light does when the Sun ſhines.* For, when it's known in the Power thereof, in times of Fainting and Diſtreſs, it hath then ſuch a Call therewith, by a preſent Efficacy, as *Pſal. 116. 7. to return unto their reſt; a reſt of Tranquility and Aſſurance from God*, in the way of a Promiſe, when there may not be the leaſt Appearance of its Performance. Thus did *Abraham* know the Truth and Power of ſuch an *Evidence* upon his Soul, when *he ſtaggered not at the Promiſe through Unbelief*; when *both the way of Povidence and the courſe of Nature*, upon his hopes of *Iſaac*, did moſt viſibly controul the ſame. But let me add herewith, that the moſt choice and experienced in the Work and Advantages of Faith, *hath not done with the Settlement hereof*, even after

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the greateſt Confirmations; for whilſt he is within time, he muſt ſtill look out, both for new Aſſaults, and further Experiments of Aſſiſtance for this end, and to attain a higher Growth: But oh! how dark and ſtrange a thing is this, and how diſreliſhing to moſt in this preſent day? who count it enough to *have their Religion in the Bibls, but not in their Sonl*; and to have it *in external Ordinances*, and *a viſible Form*, but in *no inward Enjoyments of the ſame.*

A Second Propoſal upon this *great Subject of the quieting Power of Faith, amidſt the Hazards and Terrors of Time*, is to know the Truth hereof, in the *ſureneſs of its Principles*, and on what a *clear Warrant*, ſo wonderful a Piece of our Religion does found: This I muſt touch a little, to clear the ſame, both from any *preſumptive Confidence, and enthuſiaſtick Pretences on ſuch an account*; and that its holding in the way of Right, on the Warrant of Divine Truth, is no leſs ſure, than the Enjoyment hereof is ſweet; when we can with ſuch Evidence ſee.

1. How it hath this *fundamental Principle* to hold by, that the *God of Truth hath taken the eſtabliſhing of his Peoples Faith, under his own Hand, as his alone immediate Work*, and is ſuch a Work, that none but

he can accompliſh: Thus we ſee 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. the ſureneſs of the Grounds of our Faith held forth, that *all the Promiſes of God in Chriſt, are Yea and Amen in him,* unto *the Glory of God,* &c. But though here is enough as to a Divine Warrant and Right, yet will not this alone bear out, without it be Gods immediate Work alſo, when a Storm riſeth; therefore *Verſe* 21. it's expreſly ſhewed, that *he who eſtabliſheth us in Chriſt, and hath anointed us, is God; and hath given us the earneſt of his Spirit,* to raiſe the Faith of his People, anſwerable to the Height and Meaſure of any preſent Tryal.

2. Is it not on this *ſure Principle of Truth* alſo, that *Faith* in the Power, and Supports hereof, even in the moſt extraordinary caſe of Tryal, does found? *That the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, hath not only given himſelf for us, by a legal Subſtitution in our Room, to ſatisfy Divine Juſtice, but hath given himſelf to us,* to be enjoyed in the neareſt Intimacy of Relation, and a *vital Union* with himſelf, ſo that thus he is not only the *Purchaſer,* but the *Diſpenſer* alſo, of ſuch potent Influences, as the Faith of his People, in the moſt extream caſe does need; and as he *knows the ways of the Righteous,* in their *Neceſſities,*

Neceſſities, Temptations and Hazards; ſo he hath fixed them this way, in ſuch an immediate and abſolute Dependance on himſelf, by taking off viſible Refuges, to give them a more ſpecial diſcriminating Teſtimony of his Reſpects, though then in the preſent time, it may have a very ſtrange and diſmal Appearance, whilſt it's not underſtood in ſuch a caſe, how his gracious Deſign to accompliſh the great ends of his Love to his People lyes ſo near him, as to defer oft, an anſwering of their *natural Deſires*, until things come to that Extremity, as may make way, both for the higheſt *Tryal* and *Victory of their Faith.*

3. It is one of the moſt *fundamental Grounds and Principles of Truſt*, that no *doctrinal Knowledge of this Myſtery of Faith, in its ſupporting Power* againſt the greateſt of Trouble, can avail, *without the Spirit of Faith*, 2 Cor. 4. 13. For here does *the Communion of the Holy Ghoſt, with the Saints* on the Earth moſt eminently lye, and the *Enjoyments of Faith* in the ſaddeſt Hours of Temptation are experienced, how *the Joy and Peace of believing* in ſuch a Security of Mind does thus work, when there is no natural Cauſe, or viſible Appearance for the ſame; and how in ſo ſtrange

a manner, a Chriſtians Spirit hath been oft carried above the *preſent Temptation of their day*, with ſuch Quiet and Compoſure of Mind, as even *in the midſt of great Waters, they have not come near unto them*, ſo as to ſhake and ſtagger their Confidence; and I doubt not, that many humble and tender Chriſtians, *have at ſome times, been ſealed with that inward Aſſurance by the Spirit of Faith*, and with ſuch Strength and Clearneſs of Evidence, in an *obligatory way* to their Souls, as the greateſt Aſſaults and Oppoſitions of *Satan*, which have been after made thereto, were never able to break the ſame, ſo bright and convincing hath the Conveyance of ſuch a *Seal* been in that time, as they could thus humbly *take Inſtruments*, that it was aſſuredly given them of God, and was *Truth, and no Lie.*

4. And is it not one of the *Principles and Grounds of our Faith, that the great Author thereof, hath made its Security ſo full, and with that Evidence*, as may fully countervail the want *of ocular Demonſtration by outward Senſe:* For thus does *our Bleſſed Lord teſtify*, Joh. 14. 17. when he hath there promiſed *the ſending of his Spirit to his Church, whom the World cannot receive, becauſe they ſee him not*, and can be no Object

of

of Humane Senſe, which is the only prevailing Evidence and Demonſtration, with a terrene Spirit; *but then ſhews his Diſciples*, that they had a more full and ſure Teſtimony: *For you know him, ſays he*, and I have made you ſure by a higher Evidence, as can leave no room for Doubtfulneſs; for though herein does the *excellency of Faith* moſt eminently appear, in *believing things not ſeen*, and contrary to all natural Senſe, on the Credit of Divine Revelation, yet is there no Darkneſs this way, from want of Evidence, ſince this muſt be underſtood only, *quoad evidentiam rei, ſed non quoad evidentiam teſtimonii*; which is made as full, as that which we *have ſeen with our Eyes, or have touched and handled* in that Security which God hath given to us, in his way of believing.

5. I muſt yet add one *Principle of our Faith*, for giving Light to that *ſtrong Influence and Power thereof*, amidſt the greateſt Fears and Terrors of future Events; that it is ſure ſuch *who are Chriſts, have not only things preſent, but things to come made theirs*, Cor. which is one of thoſe great Aſſurances of Truth, that ſeems little underſtood, or improved by moſt, as being not only founded on that *fundamental Right of our being Chriſts, and made*

thus Heirs of thoſe Promiſes which are in him yea, and Amen to his People; but that ſuch an entry is alſo on the Enjoyment of this right, by *the Power of believing*, and *inward Teſtimony of the Spirit*, as can fully quiet the Soul of a Chriſtian, and make *things to come* in another manner: There's then the Reſidue of the World know. It's true, there is a *rational Proſpect* and Diſcovery upon future things, by humane Wiſdom; *and the prudent Man ſees and foreſees the evil day*, to provide for the ſame as *Solomon ſpeaks*: Yea, what a thing ſhould Mans Life be without *foreſight and ſagacious decerning of* what may be the Iſſue of things, in a due Application of proper means for ſuch ends? and of thoſe *ſucceſſive Removes, that in the ſetled courſe and way of natural Cauſes*, ſeem moſt unavoidable; for on this muſt all true *humant Policy found*: But on the other hand, they ſee not how the Deſigns of a *ſupreme Providence* may be taking place above the reach of humane Thoughts, which does controul their Meaſures and Hopes, and how it was above the Sphere of ordinary Reaſon or their Foreſight, that *Events* have oft occurred betwixt *the entry and cloſe of a Year*, as they could neither ſee or prevent. But there is a *Divine Foreſight*

ſight which is of another Nature, by the *Evidence of Faith of things not ſeen and future*, without extraordinary Revelation, as can render the *Enjoyments of Hope* on the Certainty of a Divine Promiſe, to be matter of unexpreſſible Joy and Support, when it would in an ordinary way ſeem to be *againſt Hope*.

There is a *Third Propoſal*, of great weight alſo on this *Head*, to *know what may have the moſt near and immediate Influence on ſuch a Raiſedneſs and Security of a Chriſtians Soul in an extraordinary Hour of Tryal*, and does then give the greateſt Advantage to ſuch an Appearance, when it can have no viſible Cauſe for the ſame; for *Anſwer* thereto, it is indeed a Secret betwixt God and the Soul of Men, and a matter of Power rather than of Words, what can raiſe ſuch a Confidence as hath no poſſible riſe from Nature herein? and in this reſpect, thoſe who look at a diſtance, can never know where *a Chriſtians Support, and his great Strength lyes*: Yet ſince this ſeems ſo ſtrange and dark a thing to moſt, who may give ſome Aſſent to the Doctrin of our Faith, I muſt ſpeak a little further, ſo far as may tend to clear their Judgment, who would know *what manner of Perſons theſe are, who both in a judicious*

judicious and experimental way, move in ſo high a Sphere, and are thus skilled in the way of Truſt, and ſecure Reliance on an inviſible Refuge. But to render it the more clear, I ſhall touch this *in the way of Example*, by ſome peculiar View of ſuch, of whom I hope there be many this day on the Earth, to ſhew that none goes upon higher Principles of true and enlightned Reaſon. And though the Meaſures of a Chriſtians Faith and Eſtabliſhment, be not alike, but of a very different *Size*, yet may this clearly appear and be underſtood *by ſome ſpecial Characters* to illuſtrate the ſame, 1. That he is one who in a ſerious Receſs, and Retirement of his Soul, hath made a juſt Reckoning of ſuch *ſurprizing Tryals*, as lyable to a Chriſtians State here on the Earth, *where the alone way of believing againſt Senſe, muſt either be his Support and Security, or elſe periſh.* And that no preſent Condition he is in, can be ſo proſperous or promiſing, but dark and black Clouds may fall down when leaſt expected, as all humane Comfort and Aſſiſtance may fail, and have no viſible Refuges to reſt on; which hath thus brought the ſerious Thoughts of Religion and his Soul, more cloſe together, to know ſuch *an infallible way*, as can never fail, and will bear *the whole*

whole Expence of the moſt extraordinary and diſmal Trouble; and that there is *indeed, ſuch a temporal Intereſt lying thereto, as an immediate Communion with Heaven*, when the lower Springs of Comfort and Supply from the Earth, may be ſhut up; yea, ſuch a Reality, as ſupernatural Comforts in the *Peace and Joy of the Holy Ghoſt*, which are beſt known in the ſaddeſt Hour, to be undoubted and ſure. 2. But when he hath thus judiciouſly reaſoned himſelf to ſuch a *Suppoſal, he is one who is no leſs deeply awakened to provide for the ſame*, not only with reſpect to that *laſt and great Adventure of Faith upon an eternal State*, but to know where his Strength lyes, when ſuch a caſe may occurr; for then it muſt in a ſpecial way lye near, to have *a Stedfaſtneſs of his own in the Truth*, and to know the *ſtrong and firm Conveyances of the Security of our Faith on Divine Promiſe* in ſuch a manner, as ſhould not need the *Seal of a Miracle*, or *the Teſtimony of an Angel, to* ſupport the ſame; ſince as ſuch a Settlement on the Teſtimony of God, is ſurely attainable, ſo he cannot conceive how Men can poſſibly walk in the Light of any true Joy and Comfort on the Earth, until they once be at Reſt here. 3. He knows alſo, that the *greateſt Tryals wherein he is*

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ſiſted within time, is upon the Work and Acti-ings of Faith, in an Hour of Temptation, both in the *Truth* and in the *Strength* thereof; yea, how *one day* in his Life, may have ſome ſpecial Commiſſion for this end, more than many Years formerly have had; but does conſider herewith, how great the *Recompences* are even within time, that wait on the Iſſue, when the ſet Meaſure ſhall be perfected of ſuch unuſual Tryals that it ſhall be the ſame as in *Job*, 23. *to bring them forth as Gold*: And as he conſiders how high a value the Lord does put hereon, ſince the *great Diſpenſation, whereby he deals with his Church in this militant State is in the way of Truſt, and upon the Credit of his Truth*, when there is no ſenſible Evidence; ſo it is the moſt important Study of his Life, how he may acquit himſelf, and ſtand to the Proof hereof, for the Honour of his God, and Maſter, who hath counted him worthy to put him on ſome *hotter Service and more remarkable Conflicts this way than others; and that he may hold faſt the beginning of his Confidence unto the end.* 4. He muſt be reckoned *one*, who hath attained *to a ſpecial Communion with God in the ways of Providence, by frequent and deep Obſervation of the ſame*, and who thus can diſcern *the*

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great ends and deſigns which he hath upon his People, in ſuch Methods of his dealing with them that may ſeem more ſtrange and aſtoniſhing to others, and in what *dark Paths* he does uſually lead ſuch to whom he hath reſerved the greateſt Teſtimonies of his Love and Reſpect; ſo that what proves moſt ſtaggering to others, as to the way of the Lords training of his choiceſt Followers in this State of Warfare, is made a ſpecial Aſſiſtance to his further Eſtabliſhment. 5. But more eſpecially wherein his great Strength lyes is, *on that acquaintance he hath attained with the Communion of the Spirit of God*, which was once ſo dark, and not conceivable by Report; but now knows that it's an acquaintance of ſuch a kind, as is not remote or at a diſtance, but by near and ſenſible Approaches to his Soul; and is not by *Words, but by things of the greateſt Subſtance and Reality*, with the ſanctifying Vertue of the Spirit made ſo evident, as can make his Work and Services for God, to be matter of the higheſt Delight and Enjoyment; yea, he now knows what a *ſpiritual Faculty and Life*, is for correſponding with thoſe Divine Communications, ſo as with a judicious and diſcerning Ear, *he can know the voice of his beloved Maſter, from the voice*

of

of a Stranger, both in its Sweetneſs, to allure, and in its Power and Efficacy to draw, and conform their Soul into a nearer Reſemblance to himſelf, with that Tenderneſs and Fear, which is the native Reſult of ſuch an Intimacy of Converſe. 6. But as to this *marvelous Acquaintance with the Spirit of God, in order to a higher Encreaſe of Faith*; *He is one* who can give an Account hereof alſo, that in no ſingular way it was attained, but as it does reſpect the whole Community of the Saints by an unchangeable Rule, as attainable, not only in the retired Duties of Communion with God, but by an inviſible Trade and Commerce with *external Ordinances*, and the Out-lettings of *Sanctury Strength* this way, anſwerable to that *Pſal.* 20. 2. in both which Reſpects, his Faith hath oft gained a higher Intereſt and Eſtabliſhment, than by *external Providences*, as being more immediately dependent on the Spirit of God; and as all Cauſes muſt work anſwerably to the Nature thereof, ſo can he *put his Seal* and Teſtimony to that *hid Vertue and vital Influence, which thoſe Divine Inſtitutions of the Goſpel hath on Mens Soul*, and is only peculiar thereto; yea, when others who ſtay only in the *outward Court*, are bounded this way with an *andible*

ble Voice to their *Ears*, and literal Diſcovery of ſacred Truth to the Judgment, ſuch can witneſs what unexpreſſible Support hath been then enjoyed for a more full Settlement of their Faith, by *immediate Conveyances of Power and Life to their Spirits*, as hath made it ſweet matter of Admiration; what *inviſible Strength* hath in a *moral way* been thus imparted, and what remarkable Returns of Light they have had upon ſuch a Tryal of *enquiring in the Temple, from the Fountain of Divine Light*, in the way of his Word, under their darkeſt Hours; which ſometimes have been like *Elijahs Meal, in the Strength whereof, he was enabled to go Forty days*, without Faint and Wearineſs. 7. But for a further *illuſtrating of ſuch an Example* whatever in a *preparatory way he hath thus attained for a ſpecial acting of Faith* in the moſt extreme Caſe: Yet when this is not at a diſtance, but becomes a preſent viſible Object of Senſe, and comes ſo near as cannot but in ſome extraordinary way affect his Spirit, then does it yet more appear where *his Strength, and immediate Relief does lye*, in making that great *Tryal* of turning his Eyes wholly to God, by a preſent Addreſs for ſuch a ſpecial Allowance from Heaven, *that his Strength may be according*

according to his day; and then it is in his improvement of that way which God hath consecrated for the most extreme Exigences of a Christians Life, he knows the high Value and Use of such great Experiments he hath formerly made of *sensible Acceptance, and Audience* in the most astonishing Straits, with such *Testimony from Heaven* herein, and inward Evidence on his Soul, *as if Fire had come from thence to consume the Sacrifice*, so as he could then speak in that manner *Psal.* 20. 6. *Now know I that the Lord saves his Anointed*; *and* Psal. 40. 11. *I know I shall yet praise him*; yea, as he knows the way of humble Wrestling in *Prayer*, is not bounded in its Warrant, by the greatest Extremity, so, it hath been in such a case, that when God does take some unusal Tryal of his People and of their Faith, he then designs to give them some great and singular Tryal of himself. 8. *It may be further applicable to such an Example*, that though the workings of a *special Faith* in some great Exigence and Distress be such, that he cannot speak to others, as it's then felt in the Light and Power thereof; yet does he then know the Security hereof, and present Settlement of his Spirit with such Evidence, *as he sees as well as believes*, when he cannot possibly demonstrate this

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to the Conviction of others, but as he knows with Aſſurance his *Truſt* in ſuch an Hour, to be one of the moſt highly rational Acts of his Life, ſo is this no leſs evident and ſure, how the *whole ſupernatural part of Chriſtianity*, whereby a Chriſtian is raiſed above himſelf, and the Workings of natural Light and Reaſon, hath its *alone Dependence on a near and immediate Converſe with Heaven; wherein his great Strength then lies*, that when a *Tide* from without may be ſuch as ſhould quickly overwhelm his Soul, he is thus put on a higher Tryal than at other times, of the Certainty of *Divine Support by a preſent gale of the Spirit* to ſtemm the ſame; ſuch as riſeth higher than the Work or Aſſiſtance of *Angels*: Yea, how it is not *habitual Grace* only, that could make the practical uſe of the *Shield of Faith* to be clear and comforting in an Extremity, if there were not ſome very immediate Supplies. But if it be inquired what is the *Ground* whereon they muſt adventure, and reſt their Soul in ſuch an Hour, and ſhould ſpecially fix their *Anchor* on, it is not conceivable, without reſpect to *two ſpecial actings of Faith, by which* Abraham *and* Sarah did enter on the Enjoyment of the *Promiſe*,

when nothing ſeem'd in an ordinary way more impoſſible, than this, that *he was perſwaded, God was able to perform what he had promiſed*, Rom. 4. *And ſhe judged him faithful who had promiſed*, Heb. 11. 9. But yet now let me *add* this more with reſpect to ſuch an *Example*; that he is one who in a Seaſon *of greateſt Tryal*, knows the *greatneſs of that Witneſs he is then fixed under*, to be of another kind, than any humane Obſervation that may be upon him, when he hath ſo difficult and hazardous a part *to act on the Theatre of his* Life; and that he hath herein, not only the *Witneſs of the elect Angels, the watching and conſidering Eye of the Powers of Darkneſs*, who are againſt him, but above all, that he is in a more ſingular way than at other times, ſtated under the *immediate Witneſs of the Glorious Trinity*, to ſee how he acts ſuitably to the greatneſs of a divine Refuge, and theſe Aſſurances which the God of Truth hath given him to adventure on; then is it alſo that he knows the Tryal of his Faith, does not alone lie, when he is now at ſo eminent a Step thereof, for the *quiet and ſupport of his own Spirit*, but for ſuch an Appearance before Men, as may tend *to ſanctify God before the World*, and for a *putting his*

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Seal hereto, that he is faithful and true; to whom theſe have *concredited themſelves*; and that they durſt follow him, with a reſolute Reliance, when both Senſe and natural Reaſon did fail, and could give no Support in ſuch an Hour. Thus I have offered a *View in ſuch an Example*, where the Support and Strength of a Chriſtians Faith, in the moſt aſtoniſhing Hour of Temptation does lye; and of the ſolid judicious Actings thereof, *both in the way of Light and Power*: And there is herewith preſented, a ſpecial *Series and Scale of theſe Steps, whereby ſuch a Meaſure of Eſtabliſhment* is attainable under that *bleſſed Conduct of the Word and Spirit of God*, as it keeps cloſe by the *Line of Truth*, betwixt Hazards both on the Right and Left Hand; ſo that we may ſee on what firm and ſure Ground ſuch are, and have their *Anchor* fixed, who thus know the work of Faith in an extraordinary caſe of Tryal.

But now in the *laſt place*, I muſt yet in an *applicatory way, ſhut up this Diſcourſe with a more ſpecial reſpect to the times we are now in*, when ſuch great Thoughts of Heart, may be both from thoſe *ſtrange Providences that have of late gone over the Churches of Chriſt in thoſe Three Nations*, and what

my be yet expected, and on a near Approach; ſince it is ſure Men *does not know their day*, nor can take to heart, *Time and Judgment*, where there is no ſuitable Regard to the Voice of God in his *Works*, as well as in his *Word*, and what is given to be the moſt remarkable *Talent of Obſervation*, on ſuch an account. I have ſpoke a little to ſuch a *ſtrange Suppoſal the Pſalmiſt makes*, as to what might be *the Tryal of his Faith*, in the day wherein he then ſtood: But let me ſpeak a *few things* that may be judged *more than ſuppoſable with reſpect to the preſent time* wherein it ſeems in ſome ſingular way to be ſtated from other times; and though with humble Sobriety I have deſired to exoner my Soul on ſuch an Account, *in a late Eſſay, which hath been publiſhed*; yet having a riſe, both from this *Subject*, and the *preſent Aſpects of Providences*, I muſt crave leave to offer ſome *Thoughts* farther.

1. Is it not more than *ſuppoſable that ſuch an Appeal from the Lord*, as we have *Iſa.* 5, 4. hath a moſt peculiar reſpect beyond former times to this Generation? *What could I have done more to my Vineyard than I have done*, by new Methods and Tryals, both in the *way of Grace, and in the Severity of Judgments, to bring the Churches of* Britain, *again*

again unto God? Or hath there been ſuch Precedents in the way of the Lord, with any *Churches* elſe, and in that manner, as theſe 50 *Years paſt*, he hath made uſe of? And oh! what muſt be expected to work for ſuch an end, when no *inſtituted means* does anſwer thereto? and that it's evident what the higheſt Improvements of *Mens natural Power* can do, which is ſo much exalted by this Generation, to ſhut out the Neceſſity of *ſupernatural Influences* of Grace, with ſo little Fear of ſuch a *judicial Reſtraint* thereof, as is at this day: For if Men do but ſincerely reaſon their Soul unto ſerious Thoughts of ſuch a caſe, what can be ſeen now by ordinary means, to beget a deep and awful Senſe of God on Mens Souls, if he do not in ſome more immediate and extraordinary way appear; but, ſuch an aſtoniſhing Confidence and Contempt of all *Divine Signs and Threatnings*, ſeem diſcernable as nothing in a *monitory way* does work or affect in Mens Spirits: Nor is Judgment from Heaven, a matter of *Fear* with moſt, if it be not *felt*. But the ſame Spirit which we may ſee *Iſa.* 5. 19. may be viſible in the preſent times, when they ſaid, *Let him make ſpeed, and haſten his work, that we may ſee it; and let the*

Counſel of the Holy one of Iſrael *draw near, that we may know it*; which was in an expreſs way to ſpeak, that neither their *Faith nor their Fear, did riſe higher than ſenſible Evidence and Demonſtration of what was preſent in their ſight.*

2. It's a matter of Truth alſo, is more than ſuppoſable, that the *Stability of the Earth beneath us, can give no Aſſurance and ſolid Quiet of Spirit, to thoſe who dwell thereon, until they be at Peace with Heaven*: But whilſt they reckon that nothing is more ſure to build their Hopes on, than this lower Earth, and thus have their Hearts on the ſame Level therewith, may ſee how amidſt their greateſt Confidence and Expectation, their Judgment may then immediately have its Riſe from the ſame, ſo as in one Hour, to make the alone Support of their Confidence, to be the *Grave thereof*; and whatever ſome have writ as to the *foregoing Preſages of any remarkable Earthquake*, before it took place, yet was it never known, that an Appearance of God this way, either to forewarn as a *Sign*, or as a *preſent Judgment*, did occurr but with a preſent *Surprizal*, when nothing hereof, was feared or ſuſpected: And it hath ever been one of the moſt immediate Signs of *ſudden Deſtruction*, when

a Peoples Security hath come to that height, as nothing could be awakning in ſuch a caſe, anſwerable to that 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 3. when they ſaid, *Peace, Peace*, then was a deſtroying Stroak moſt imminent and near. And I may ſpeak this with Aſſurance, that either theſe *late Providences* by which God hath in ſo remarkable a manner made himſelf known, ſhall be regarded as *Signs*, and carry Mens Spirits above any Product of *natural Cauſes* herein unto God, *or will at laſt be felt, by what is ſignified thereby.*

3. I hope, it can be no queſtionable thing with any of a ſerious and conſidering Spirit, that as the *ſtanding of the World*, and its being ſecured from the Extremity of Juſtice, is alone by a *Diſpenſation of Grace, and the Tenor of the Second Covenant*, with reſpect to the *Church* therein, ſo is it in no other way but of Grace only, that *Britain hath this day, any Claim or Charter of Right, to the Bleſſings of Providence, and for having the Hedges of Divine Protection kept up*: Nor could the furtheſt of humane Strength and Counſel avail then, if once the full meaſure of the Long-ſuffering and Tenderneſs of God, ſhould be ſummed up, that hath aſſuredly its ſet Bounds, to the moſt eminent *Church-*

es where ſometimes God hath moſt remarkably ſhined; and oh! what a thing ſhould this World be to live in, were it but fore one Day or Hour, if there ſhould be *a withholding of an immediate Divine Care and Inſpection* over the ſame, or for ſo ſmall a time, *that Door could be ſhut up of Entercourſe betwixt Heaven and the Saints here*, which by a Divine immutable Conſtitution of Grace, is kept open, whilſt they are within time: But this is a thing as to any publick and national Intereſt, that ſeems to have little Credit or Regard with Men, *what inviſible Influence ſuch a hid Party*, who makes leaſt Appearance in the Earth, *hath on the greateſt Changes thereof*; and how a filling up the *Meaſure of the Elect*, in a Nation and Continuance of the *Candleſtick there*, *with the overſight of a ſpecial Providence*, is ſtill of the ſame Extent.

4. It is a *Dilemma* of undeniable Evidence, as to the *publick State and Intereſt of thoſe Nations*, *that we muſt either have God for us*, in the Efficacy and Out-goings of his Providence, *or againſt us: That God*, who in the ſupreme Adminiſtration of his Government over the World, *ſtands not as Neuter*, or as a Witneſs only to the Actings of Men; but if he be not

on

on our ſide, and intereſted in our Cauſe, we muſt then know him as an *Adverſary*: For there can be no poſſible midſt herein, *that God, whoſe Room all the World cannot ſupply, if he ſhould be ſhut out of our Counſels*; yea, ſuch *a God* we have both to fear and rely on, who is not one like to our ſelves, to be put off with Words, or a complemental Addreſs in a *ſtated Form only*, or can expect in Faith, that this will bring Aſſiſtance to turn the *Scale of Providence on our ſide*, if he be not according to his revealed Counſel, with an intire Reliance on him alone, *adored and feared as God*: Yea, it's ſure in no humane Affairs, he does *more immediately appear, and by an extraordinary Miniſtery of the Angels*, than in the *deciſion of War and of Battels*, For which cauſe he does in ſo ſpecial a reſpect, take that *Style* unto himſelf, *to be the Lord of Hoſts*. It ſhould ſeem a ſtrange and aſtoniſhing thing, *how Men can live in the Earth without God*, without whom they cannot live for one Moment, and in whoſe Hand their Breath is; yet if we look to the *publick State of Religion* this day, nothing may be more applicable to the moſt numerous part of the *Reformed Churches* than this; and that the *Senſe of a Deity, hath more Power and Influence amongſt Heathens*,

thens, who walk in the Name of their God, than it hath amongſt *Millions of* profeſſed Chriſtians; for except we ſhut out Reaſon, ſuch muſt be ſurlie ſaid to *live without God in the Earth, and not to walk in his Name*, who live without any reſolute dependance and truſt upon him in the courſe and conduct of their affairs; whoſe great buſineſs in the World lies *only with Men*, and are much more influenced by ſuch a fear, than of his frownings, and terror, who made Heaven and Earth; when it ſeem's now eaſie with moſt to *loſe God*, if they may gain *Men*, and make an intreſt that way, tho the purchaſe will never bear the expence; yea, can go the fartheſt length of *external Worſhip* in Church Aſſemblies, and yet be *without God*, then as to any *internal converſe or injoyment* of him by inward acts of adoration; and what account can ſuch poſſibly make of an *inviſible God*, who know no other meaſure of their confidence, but as *viſible things* do either ſmile or frown upon them; but there is one reſpect further wherein we may ſee how moſt, who profeſs the name of God, do this day *live without him* in the Earth, which is in the way of *obſervation* of what paſſeth betwixt him and them,

them, whether by *providences* or *influences on their Soul*, but take all things at an adventure, without any higher looke than what is from *Secondary causes*, though it was *in this way* that an *Enoch*, an *Noah*, and the whole race of the Saints, who have gon before, knew what it was *to walk with God* in the Earth, no leſs in diſcerning *his appearances, and work towards them*, than *their way and ſervices towards him*; But oh! what will he do with us, when it may be feared that the moſt prevailing *ſuffrage* and *vote* of the generation we are now in, ſhould be this (if their Soul might ſpeak for them in ſuch a caſe) *let God depart from us, for we deſire not the Knowledge of the Moſt High*, ſince this lght tends only to be tormenting, and does afford no comfort to ſuch; or can it be expected, that he will allow in this age a *Reſtoring Miracle* to bring men again to the faith and ſenſe of the Deity, as he did *in the days of Elia*, when we have a much greater *Talent* to be accountable for, than theſe had, or any *former Ages* paſt, having the *whole income of their Confirmations and improvements added to our Stocks?*

5 Tho the great intreſt of that myſterie of a *Chriſtians Faith*, which is the

ſpecial

ſpecial Subject of this Diſcourſe, does in the firſt place reſpect our *Reconciled State, and juſtification before God*, yet is it too evident that the moſt uſually trying and difficult part thereof, is, with reſpect to the *Tryals and conflicts of time*, and ſucha day, when they muſt *live immediately on God*, and give him *the Glory of his Godhead* when no viſible means can ſupport, which is that *wonderful experiment of Faith* in the power thereof that is here expreſly pointed at, when it is by the *Spirit of God* as his immediate work alone *proportioned to the moſt extraordinary hight of a Chriſtians Tryal*; but as to the *filling up of this great work of Faith* in the appointed meaſure thereof, it does principally 1. reſpect *the whole State and times of the elect Church*, and on this account, there is ſtill a growing increaſe as to the meaſure of the *work of Faith* ſince *Abel the righteous*, and is not yet come in many degrees to that full hight of perfection which it muſt have before the cloſe of time; yea, herein hath *each of the Saints their proper ſhare and intereſt* for bringing forth the Glory of this excellent Grace to it's greateſt diſplay before *Angels and Men*, which is an end worthy of all the Tryals, and ſuffering

times

times which have ever gone over the Church, becauſe this way of giving glory to God is only within time. 2. But it muſt be underſtood alſo that in *each age of the Church there are ſome more illuſtrous examples* that the Lord does afford to the World this way, in whom his Grace in the power thereof hath a greater triumph in the way of paſſive valour than in theſe, who have been moſt admired upon their *Heroick Actings* and conqueſt over Men. 3. It is undeniable alſo what eminent *experiments* have been thus afforded, upon theſe adventures of a Chriſtians Faith, which did not then anſwer the *ordinary Standard* of the Tryals, which others have had; and though we may confidently hope, that the higheſt meaſure of the *ſuffering times of the Church* is now accompliſhed and paſt, and of the tryal of the *paſſive Graces of the Spirit*, yet it may be matter of fear that the Faith of Chriſtians in this day may have *ſome more extraordinary* Eſſay in the way of Judgment, as to the publick State of the Church, and of theſe Nations now in theſe *laſt times of the Gentiles*, than what hath been in *ages paſt*, and may need more than ordinary *ballaſt* to bear up againſt the darkneſs thereof,

thereof, when ſuch a *midnight hour* ſeems immediately to preceed the dawning of that bright Sun-ſhine, which may be truly reckoned the brightneſs of Chriſt's ſecond coming, in that laſt ſtate of time.

6. May it not be matter of unavoidable evidence alſo as to the preſent State of the Church that there is ſurely *ſome eminent period of providence, to which ſo ſwift and extraordinary a courſes of remarkable changes*, as hath in a ſucceſſive way ſtill attended *theſe Nations*, have a proper tendency; theſe being ſo unuſual and aſtoniſhing, and out of the way of the Lords ordinary working, as the moſt judicious, and deep diſcerners of things could not to this day have reaſoned their falling out on principles of humane reaſon; yea ſuch, as I muſt humbly judge, will not ceaſe, until *the Spirit of God be quieted in that great Deſign* which he is to accompliſh hereby anſwerable to that *Zach.* 6, 8. on which he hath ſet his heart, who leaves not his work unperfected, which hath alſo the ſame ſenſe, and intent. Iſa. 66. 9. *Shall I bring to the birth, and not cauſe to bring forth*, &c. nor (I am perſwaded) will any humane counſel make *civil eſtabliſhments* to be effectual, until that great deſign of Providence be

be more underſtood, and concurred with.

7. It is now a day of great expectation how the *next ſcene* of Providence may *open* for a farther clearing of this deſign of the Lord about which I judge theſe who have neareſt converſe with God this day by his Word and Spirit, ſee cauſe to give their *fears the firſt place before their hopes*, as to ſome very extrordinary work of judgment that from all *ſigns* ſeems to lie neareſt now to the *reformed Churches in the frame of providence*, tho we are like to have little either of Faith or fear, when it comes, until it be made an object of Senſe; but I am ſure a few of theſe evident *prognoſticks* that now are in our ſight, would have deeply affected the Spirits of ous *Fathers*, when we may ſee no Providences are ſo extraordinary, as to have any ſanctifying influence on Mens Souls for the moſt part, or to advance the *publick ſtate of Religion* as formerly; when an *outward Calm and a dead Lethargy* herewith does ſo viſibly ſtill go together, which hath a more mortal aſpect on the preſent ſtate of *Britain* than might be judged from the higheſt *Paroxiſm* of perſonal ſufferings; when the *Chriſtian intereſt* this day for accompliſh-

accompliſhing the great deſigns of Grace under a reformed profeſſion thereof is as a low thing in Mens eyes in reſpect of what is more extrinſick, and foreign thereto; when alſo the long decreaſe of that *tide* of power, and influences of Religion on Mens Souls hath at laſt come to ſuch *an ebb* by theſe *judicial removes of the Spirit of God*, that without ſome very immediate appearance from Heaven we might fear *leſt Truth ſhould quickly periſh from the Earth*; yea, when it's ſo evident that *God is yet calling for ſome to ſtand in the gap, and make up the hedge* before Judgment go forth, butt almoſt none found to anſwer it's voice; ſo intently are Mens Spirits now, even of ſuch, who outgo others in a profeſſion ſet upon *deſigns about their own things*; and it hath ſurely ever been a diſmal ſign to a Nation, when it becomes rare to find any ſuitable *Inſtruments*, and *Tools* to anſwer a *reſtoring work* therein, or to ſee that *raiſedneſs of Spirit* for ſuch an end, as hath been formerly, which may be feared ſpeaks the long ſhadows of the Evening before ſome horror of great Darkneſs are too viſibly ſtretched out. But if Men do count theſe things ſmall and remote from their eyes, and will raiſe a confi-

dence,

dence, that it ſhall be *Peace, until there be another Appearance for God and the Intereſt of his Kingdom, than hath yet been.* It may make the Diſappointment Sad, and Dreadful in the Iſſue: One thing I have thought ſtrange, how there can be a *National Love* and Reſpect to its Intereſt in another way, than to *have God Intereſted both in their Caſe and Cauſe*, in the firſt Room; *or how Solemn* and *Publick Thaksgivings*, in a ſtated external Form for the moſt eminent Appearances of God, *whether as to a Nation, or to a City, or to Perſons*, is ſo viſibly divided from ſuch an eſſential part thereof, which is by *Thankofferings*, and *ſome Returns to him in a promiſſory way by Deeds and Performances*, as well as by *Words*, ſuitable to the Weight of ſuch Engagements. But this is a rare Practice now to be found on the Earth, to deſign ſome ſpecial *Conſecration of the Gain of any eminent National Mercies unto God this way.*

8. Yet whatever may be too evident in the matter of our *Fear*, it's ſure that the juſt Grounds of our *Hopes in behalf of the Church, does far exceed the ſame:* And though there be many extraordinary *Signs* to cauſe Terror and Conſternation of Spirit, *there is one Sign of another kind*, that

will compenſe all, which is *that Sign of the Son of Man*, *Mat.* 24. 30. as it is to be underſtood in a *promiſſory Senſe*; and how that great *Mourning of the Tribes of the Earth*, which is there ſpoke, to attend ſuch a Sign, hath the ſame Senſe with that, *Zach.* 12. 10. and is clearly *expoſitory* of the ſame, *They ſhall look on me whom they have Pierced, and Mourn*, &c. as alſo that evident *Parallel*, Rev. 1. 6. ſince theſe do ſo jointly bear evidence to the Nature and Intent of ſuch a *Sign*, as will then have an eminent Appearance with the firſt *entry*, and *returning of the Jews unto him, whom their Fathers did pierce.* I know ſome of the *greateſt Writers* of this Age, ſuch as *Uſher*, *Twiſs*, and *Mead*, and of late that Worthy Man Mr. *Mather* of *New-England*, take this in the ſame Senſe, only ſeem to reckon this *Sign* to be the *thing ſignified of Chriſt himſelf*, in a viſible Appearance then to the World: But this will be e're long in another manner underſtood in the Event. Yet I have found it ſo ſweet a Subject of Thoughts in theſe diſmal and ſad Times, when other *Signs* are ſo tremendous, that in ſome things which are moſt clear herein, and ſuitable to humble Sobriety, I muſt ſpeak a few things. 1. How it is unqueſtionable, this is that *one*

Sign

Sign by way of Singularity, *which our Blessed Head and Redeemer, does appropriate to himself* as his, and to be the Sign κατ' ἐξοχὴν of the *Son of Man*, such as hath never been given to the World like thereto, nor will ever be, until he come himself to Judgment. 2. It is surely a *Sign* which must be Publick and Conspicuous to the World, *in some extraordinary Vision to humane Sense*; for therein is the Intent of that *Prediction* made express and clear: But as to the Nature hereof, or its Duration, I judge it suitable not to enquire, where the *Holy Ghost* hath not more particularly cleared the same, and reserved a further Discovery thereof, to the *Event*. 3. It is sure also, when this great Appearance shall be to the World, it will be with that demonstrative and undubitable Evidence as the *Sign of the Son of Man*, as will beyond any Contradiction, expound it self, and verify such a *Prediction of our Blessed Lord*, before Angels and Men. 4. It must be understood as a *Sign* that will be *deeply affecting*, and work in an extraordinary way on Mens Spirits, to cause so great and universal *a Mourning*, which will not be as some have understood, *a Mourning* from *Horror*, but what will be a Result not only

of the Greatneſs and Certainty of the *Sign*, but of an extraordinary Concurrence of the Spirit of God herewith, to anſwer that eminent Deſign of Grace, with a peculiar reſpect to the *Jewiſh race*, as may be clearly ſeen *Zach.* 12. 12. And herein I humbly judge, as *in the firſt times of the Goſpel, the Jews did require a Sign* from Heaven to engage them to the Chriſtian Faith, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks 1 *Cor.* 1. 22. ſo that this way now in the *laſt times*, both with an eminent Rebuke to their Infidelity, and marvelous Condeſcendence of Grace, he will yet in ſuch a manner appear. 5. But it muſt ſtill be according to what the Scripture expreſſes, a *Sign*, and not the *thing ſignified*, or *perſonal Appearance* of our Bleſſed Lord in his *humane Nature, whom the Heavens muſt contain until the full Reſtitution of all things*; wherein I muſt differ from the Judgment of ſuch *great Interpreters*, who take it in the other Senſe, though this will aſſuredly be ſuch a *Sign*, as is then to have ſome extraordinary *Impreſs* and *Signature* upon it, to be demonſtrative to the World, and the *Jews* more peculiarly, of the *Humanity of our Bleſſed Redeemer*. 6. But whatever may be the Glory and Splendor of ſo extraordinary an Appearance, it muſt

muſt be ſtill reckoned ſuch as the ſtate of Mortality can bear, ſince that *Viſion* that he gave to his *beloved Diſciple* John, of himſelf in his glorified State, *Rev.* 1. was ſo overpowering, as he who had ſometimes *leaned on his Boſom*, whilſt he was on the Earth, did then *fall as dead at his Feet*; and except it were ſuppoſed that he ſhould put a Veil on his Glory, in ſuch a viſible and immediate Appearance of his *humane Nature*, it is not conceivable, how even the Saints on the Earth, much more the reſidue of the World, could bear a *ſign* of that Nature: And herein my Soul doth reſt with Aſſurance, as to the *Senſe and Intent of the Scripture*, about that much deſired *Sign*, after ſerious and humble enquiry about the ſame. Though I muſt crave leave to add this further, with a ſpecial Confidence, that this *Sign*, which is to be the greateſt, is to be given in a Monitory way of his Second coming, is now ſurely *on a near Approach*, as being both that great *Signal of Grace* to the poor *Jewiſh World*, and of its being very near to a perfecting of the Work of time, and his *coming to judge the World*; yea, ſince the *finiſhing of the times of the Gentiles*, and that great Tide and Effuſion of the Spirit,

which will then bring a *Reſurrection* therewith, *from the Dead* to the *Jews*, does contemporate together, the *promiſſory Evidences* of the near Approach hereof, are ſuch as I hope many of this Generation now in the Earth, may be made Witneſſes thereto.

9. I know it is reckoned uſually, that the accompliſhing of theſe great Deſigns of Providence, which are yet to take place now in the *laſt Ages of the World*, and the *Exhibition of this wonderful Sign of the Son of Man, may be at a great diſtance of time*, as to the *Event* thereof, upon which I have had the ſame Thoughts, until a more deep enquiry and ſearch about the Counſel of God herein, hath brought me under a conſtraint of Light, to ſee how *the work of time* in all its Intents, is nearer to a final cloſe, than ſeems to be apprehended by moſt; and that we are now ſurely near to an entring on the *laſt Watch* of that long Night of the *Churches Militant State*, when her *Warfare* ſhall for ever be accompliſhed, and there will be no more ſuch *long Stages in the Courſe and Procedure of Providence*, as hath formerly been; but when the *laſt part of Scripture Propheſie is once come to the Birth*, and full height of Accompliſhment, then i'ts

to

to be hoped that a *few Years* will bring forth more than hath been formerly attained in ſome *Ages*; yea, to this doth the *Spirit ſpeak expreſly* with reſpect to that great and wonderful *Revolution* in the *laſt times*, by the *incalling of the Jews, and final Deſtruction of Antichriſt*, that then *he will cut ſhort his Work in Righteouſneſs, and finiſh the ſame*; *becauſe a ſhort Work will the Lord make upon the Earth*, Rom. 9. 28. by which the *way* and *manner of the courſe of Providence*, is clearly expreſſed, as it will be in the *evening of time*, from what it hath been formerly; the Word there in the *Original*, *is* λόγ☉ to ſhew that as the work of God which he hath upon the Earth, is the alone Product, and Accompliſhment of his Word, ſo when the Adminiſtration of Providence, is drawing near to its laſt Period and Cloſe, then *will he cut it ſhort*, and haſten the ſame in ſome extraordinary way; yea, allot more to *a Day or Year*, than he did to many Years before, in the ordinary courſe of his working; and as the *firſt bringing forth of the Creation was a ſhort Work*, and a ſwift courſe that Omnipotency took herein, ſo may *the laſt Conſummation* and Cloſe of the great Work of Providence, be expected to make no Delay: I am ſure the *Holy*

Ghoſt ſpeaks expreſly for this end, in that *aforecited Scripture*, beſides other Paſſages of Sacred Truth, which give Light and Confirmation thereto; but in *what Senſe the cutting ſhort of the Work of God in the laſt times, and his making a ſhort Work in the Earth* is to be underſtood, I muſt humbly offer what I am in Faith perſuaded hereof, as agreeable to the Intent of that Scripture. 1. How it is to be a *ſhort Work*, and a very ſwift Motion that ſhall be then in the *Churches Increaſe, and in gathering of the Elect*, as what will be anſwerable to that great extent of the *Church Univerſal*, when it is made up both of *Jews and Gentiles*, and in ſuch a *day of Power, as the Dew of his Youth, ſhall be as the Womb of the morning*, Pſal. 110. 3. For though it be clear that the *laſt Triumph of Chriſt's viſible Kingdom*, and the Glory of his Grace in order to *Converſion*, muſt aſſuredly have a *great Harveſt* therewith, for in-bringing of the Saints, and filling up of that large Room, which is yet void in the Church Triumphant, in the whole appointed meaſure thereof, yea, may be judged ſuch as ſhall bear a Reſemblance to that Progreſs of Grace, and wonderful Product of its Efficacy in the *firſt times of the Goſpel*, ſo is it to be expected

that

that this *laſt Tide of the Effuſion of the Spirit of God*, ſhall be ſo ſtrong and prevalent, as to attain the *Work of an Age* formerly in a very ſhort time, and verify that Scripture to the Amazement of the World, *Iſa.66.* 10. how *a Nation and People ſhould be Born, and formed to the Lord in a day.* But I muſt herewith ſpeak to a ſad Miſtake, that I humbly judge many are upon, as to the *meaſure of that Prophetick Millennium*, and higheſt Glory of Chriſts viſible Reign herein, as if that definite time of a *Thouſand Years*, ſhould be underſtood *extenſively* of ſuch a *preciſe number of Years*, and of ſo long a Duration, when the Intent of the Holy Ghoſt herein, ſeems ſo clear and evident, that it's rather *intenſively* to be taken in the Value and Splendor thereof, when *the Light of one day will be as of ſeven in one*, and the Work of God in a ſhort meaſure of time then, will *virtually* amount to *a Thouſand Years.* I know it's accknowledged by all, and clearly underſtood as *David* ſpeaks *Pſal.* 90. and the Apoſtle, 2 *Pet.* 2. how *a Thouſand years with the Lord is but as a day*; yet ſeems the Senſe of this to be little apprehended by moſt, how *a day before the Lord, may be as a Thouſand years*: And how it's intended there, to ſhew his put-

ing ſuch a Value and Glory thereon, as it may amount to the Product of a *Thouſand years* formerly in the ordinary courſe of Providence. 2. It is in this reſpect alſo that the Lords making *a ſhort work in the Earth*, in the laſt times of the Church, may be underſtood by a more *ſwift courſe than uſual, in order to the perfecting of the Saints*, who then are on the Earth, *and ripening of them for Heaven*; ſo that anſwerable to their *Attainments of Grace* in a more extraordinary growth herein, their *Tranſlation to Glory* will be the more haſtned, and the Meaſure of the Work and Services of their time, more quickly perfected: This with humble Sobriety, I have ſometimes, and do ſtill judge, that the *Lords cutting ſhort his work then*, may be no leſs remarkable in the *ſhort Period and Duration* which the Saints ſhall have on the Earth, after their Calling, than that long Meaſure which was allotted to Men in the firſt entry of time, as congruous to this deſign of Grace, to make a ſhort work then, and haſten the full Tranſlation of the Church to its Triumphant State. 3. It is to be judged in this reſpect alſo, will appear that *cuting ſhort of the Work of God in the laſt times, by bringing forth the great deſigns of Providence*, which

which are then to have their full Accompliſhment, with *ſo extraordinary a gale of Divine Power, and ſwift courſe* thereof, as will admit no Halting or Delay, but ſhall attain that in a very ſhort time, which to our Thoughts, would ſeem great for an *Age* to bring forth. We can ſee now with full evidence for *what great ends the Service and Uſe of time hath been from the firſt entry thereof, and what deſigns the Bleſſed Author of the ſame, hath had on the Ages paſt: But when we look forward to the laſt Intent and Work thereof*, there ſeems to be very dark and ſtrange Thoughts hereof, by many, though the Spirit of God by Divine Revelation, is clear and expreſs about the ſame, as to what muſt *be yet filled up of the Work and Adminiſtration of Providence before the end: The Teſtimony of Chriſt, which is the Spirit of Propheſie*, was moſt ſpecially directed under the *Old Teſtament*, upon his *Prieſtly Office*; but now is the Glory of this *Teſtimony*, as to the *Propheſies under the New Teſtament*, in a peculiar way, ſettled on his *Kingly Office*, in the whole *Progreſs* and *Gradations of his viſible Kingdom*, until the cloſe of Time; and it's in a *Twofold reſpect*, that the *Spirit of Propheſie* does reveal the great deſigns of Providence, which

which are yet to be perfected before the end of time: The *firſt is as to a breaking down*, and final Overthrow of the *Kingdom of Antichriſt under the laſt Vials*; yea, as to the *Methods of Providence*, and the *manner* hereof, is alſo expreſs and clear, that when the time is once come for this great and magnificent Act of Judgment on that *City*, and *Seat of the Beaſt by the Fifth Vial*, it will then make a ſtrange and *unuſual diſpatch*, and be an amazing Surprizal, as the Scripture ſpeaks *Rev.* 18. 7, 8. *when ſhe ſays, I ſit as a Queen, and ſhall ſee no Sorrow; then in one day ſhall her Plagues come; for ſtrong is the Lord God who judgeth her.* Nor can this be more marvelous in our Eyes when it comes, than what we have ſeen of the *degrees of Wrath and Judgment*, that are already fulfilled on this *Adverſary*; ſo as I muſt judge by Scripture Evidence, this will be a work of ſhort time, as it will bear an extraordinary and immediate Appearance of God therewith: But there *is one great deſign further in that way of breaking down*, and overturning which muſt yet take place in the *final Judgment of the Mahumetan Empire*, both as to *Turks* and *Perſians*; which as it may be clearly underſtood by the *Sixth Vial*, and does with great evi-

dence

dence relate to what is foretold of this *Adverſary*, Rev. 9. 14. under the *Sixth Trumpet*, ſo as to the *manner* hereof, in that *Alluſion of drying up the River of* Euphrates; when formerly we ſee how *theſe Angels* were let looſe for Deſtruction, who were *bound* thereat: We may ſee how the ſame *Alluſion* does ſpeak ſuch a work of Judgment, as will be ſtrange, ſudden and ſurprizing, as the *drying up of* Euphrates, by Diverſion of that *River*, did in one Night, make way to finiſh the *Babyloniſh Empire in the time of* Cyrus; and now ſome *prelude* and remarkable Steps of Judgment, as to *the fall of that Empire*, have been of late very obvious: But yet in a Concurrence herewith, there is one *great deſign of Providence*, to be accompliſhed before the end, which is *for building up, and a reſtoring work on that great and long Ruin of the ſcattered Jews*; and thus *for gathering together in one, in the Diſpenſation of the fulneſs of time, all things in Chriſt, even in him*, Eph. 1. 10. which *Scripture*, I muſt humbly judge, ſpeaks peculiarly to that *laſt uniting work about the Church Univerſal, both of the Jews and Gentiles:* When *the times of the Gentiles* are once Accompliſhed, which as I have a little touched before, then will it be underſtood

ſtood in the *Event*, how the *Value and Intereſt of a day*, may be by the Lord in that manner heightned as to ſum up and abridge therein, what had not been attained in a *Thouſand years* before: It was in the *firſt times of the Goſpel*, that *the Effuſion of the Spirit of God*, and Out-goings of his Power was ſo wonderful and ſtrong, as in *Forty years*, *the extent of the Chriſtian Church*, *after the Aſcention of Chriſt*, *was then greater in the World*, *than it ſeems to be at this day*; which I do not queſtion, ſhall yet once more before the cloſe of time, be no leſs wonderful in the ſwift Courſe and Conqueſt of Grace, both as to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, than it was at that time. But as no *great Excellencies*, or extraordinary Splendor in any Appearances of God, have been of a *long Duration*, whilſt the Church here is *Militant*, ſo the nearer all things are to the *Center in the final cloſe of time*, we ſhould expect as God hath expreſly ſpoke, that it will be with a remarkable *cutting ſhort of his Work then*; and that the World will be in a ſtrange manner ſurprized with his *laſt coming*: Yea, that the greatneſs of ſuch a Harveſt of *Iſraels Converſion*, will bring in more in a ſhort time, than many Ages hath done formerly. 4. It is alſo in this

reſpect

reſpect that the *making a ſhort work in the cloſe of time*, may be judged, that after ſuch extraordinary Diſcoveries of God, and Methods of Grace, the final Oppoſition then made thereto by the World, will to the furtheſt, make way for the *laſt deciſion of Judgment*, when the *Harveſt of the Earth* is thus ripened and made *White*, under ſuch prodigious meaſures of Guilt, more than in all Ages paſt; as the Righteous God will then be Intereſted in Vindication of his Glory, to ſhut up for ever, that long Period of his *Patience* and *Long-ſufferings*. 5. Let me but add upon *this Head*, that I account it a *peculiar Demonſtration of God*, which he hath reſerved to the laſt *times of the Church*, to ſhew before *Angels and Men*, *what uſe he can make of a ſhort time*, *for the greateſt ends*, and how far he can cauſe it to amount in *perfecting of his Work*, to bring forth ſuch wonderful things in a *few days or years*, that would ſeem as incomprehenſible to Reaſon, as *for the Earth to bring forth in a day*, *or for a Nation to be created therein*, Iſa. 66. 10. It hath been the Glory of God, that ſome ſhould *live more in a few years*, and act a greater part on the Stage, than others in a *long Age*; the firſt Service of time was beyond all that ever followed

lowed upon this Account, made wonderful and glorious, when *one day* brought at once forth the *Sun*, *Moon*, *and Stars*; and ſet them in their proper *Orbs*, and *another day brought forth that Intellectual Being of Man, made after the Image of God*; and can it be ſtrange that the ſame God give ſuch a Demonſtration of himſelf, and of the glory of his Power, in *the laſt ſhutting up of his Work*, as the World may ſee it's not in the Reverence of Time, nor of Ages, when his Deſign and Counſel herein is to take place: But if Men will raiſe and build their Hopes on the *long Duration* of this horrid and ſad World now in its *Old Age*, and think their *Houſes ſhall be continued for many Generations*; it will be a ſad Surprizal in the Cloſe, when they are found in the ſame Poſture at the *coming of the Son of Man*, as it was in the *days of* Noah: And I doubt not the *ſwift motions of Providence, for making a ſhort Work in the Earth*, will be yet rendred more aſtoniſhing than all we have hitherto ſeen; Bleſſed are they that *watch* and *wait* with *Joy*, for the drawing near of *this great day of their Redemption*, though the *preciſe day* and time hereof, be alone known to the Lord.

10. It

10. It is true, that the way of the Lord may ſeem to controul any *ſwift Motion and Courſe of Providence* in his Procedure this day, *when the Wheels do to our Senſe ſtand ſtill*, and things yet kept in a *Suſpence*, as to any great or remarkable *Deciſion* in the publick State of Affairs; yea, when after ſuch Expectations now for a conſiderable time, there is ſo ſtrange an *Interval of Silence*, as to the Work of God in this Part of the World, and the *Ballance* kept in an unuſual manner, *equal betwixt the* French *and the whole Confederates*, which are againſt him: It is unqueſtionably, matter of great Thoughts of Heart, what the Event may be e're long of ſuch an aſtoniſhing *Calm* and *Stop*. But in order to this, let me humbly ſpeak a few things to be conſidered. 1. How in all times of the Church, it hath been made obſervable, That *when the Lord is to bring forth ſome great Work of Judgment on the World, and on particular Nations*, he does not only reinforce Warnings, and gives time herein to anſwer his Call, but even when *his Hand is lifted up, will yet hold the ſame*: But where the moſt Signal Delay and Forbearance hath gone before, it's ſure the more dreadful and ſad, is the *Stroak* when it

comes at laſt. 2. Though there needs a Divine Light to make a right Eſtimate and Judgment of things which relate to the *preſent day*, yet if Men admit Reaſon, it may be too eaſie to ſee, that there is no *ſlow motion* in the viſible tendency of things, as they now move *in theſe Three Nations to ſome fatal and ſudden Period*; except theſe things which ſhould thus awaken our Fears, have a more ſpecial Influence to direct unto theſe Duties, which might yet prevent the ſame: For even *judicious Reaſon may Prophecy* what Aſpect *ſuch Evils* have, as by a native and unavoidable Reſult have the moſt near and immediate Influence *on a Nations Ruin*, when they are come to that Height, as will admit no *Cure*: And when the moſt numerous Part of a *Proteſtant Profeſſion* therein, are ſo viſibly ſtated in Emnity to other, purſuing different and contrary Intereſts, *as cannot but lay a dead lift on all publick Actings this day*: When alſo the *Contagion of Example* is ſo prevalent and mortal, but the Comfort thereof ſo rare, *as to any of a truly Raiſed and Heroick Spirit.* And if we look to theſe who have a *leading Intereſt in theſe Nations, as to their Stations and Qualities*, how few of ſuch may be now found, whoſe *Anceſtors* had

had an eminent Appearance for God in their day, that have the *Spirit of their Fathers reſting on them?*

But now in the 3*d. place*, I muſt crave leave to ſpeak a little more fully in order to a *trying and inquiſitive Judgment on a very great and affecting Head, what it ſhould mean that there are ſuch threatning Appearances of Hazard to* Britain *from the* French *Power, in theſe times we are in:* I know it may ſeem a hopeful Sign, that *ſuch a Party* as we have to deal with, are ſuch alſo againſt whom the *Blood of Thouſands of Proteſtants* is crying to Heaven. And I am perſwaded, *that the Holy God will in due time, avenge theſe ſtrange meaſures of Cruelty exercis'd there, upon the Houſe of* Bourbon; and have Indignation againſt that Race, *until the Sun ceaſe to Riſe and Set*: But on the *other hand*, I muſt ſpeak, that ſurely there ſeems ſomething in an unuſual way, *threatning in the preſent Aſpect of this Adverſary*; on which I ſhall offer a few ſerious Reflections. 1. That for ſeveral Years paſt there hath been ſuch remarkable evidence *of a Seal of their Commiſſion for Judgment*, not only to *take Peace from this part of the Earth*, but to be the *Rod* of Divine Indignation *againſt the Refomed Churches*: For it hath been under this *Rod*, that hitherto the moſt deſtructive Ddſigns have had the

moſt viſible Succeſſes; and when an *Inſtrument of Judgment* is of Gods chooſing, and hath an *anointing for this end put upon him*, it proves then to be very formidable, as it hath the *Impreſs of his Terror and Greatneſs put thereon*, beyond what is at another time; and is thus acted with an inviſible Power and Concurrence, until ſuch a Work of Judgment be accompliſhed. 2. We ſee this is an *Adverſary* who in this late Deſign againſt the *whole Proteſtant Intereſt* in the *Kingdom of* France, hath had ſuch prevailing Succeſſes, to carry on a ruining and judicial work of that nature, when in former times the *Proteſtants there, did with an Heroick and Invincible Spirit*, bear out againſt the utmoſt Power and Violence of *Four Kings ſucceſſively*; and could ſee them by an extraordinary Divine Hand broke: But oh! now was the *day turned* no leſs remarkably, and the Attempts of *this King* followed with that Terror, Fainting and Lowneſs of Spirit, as to any ſelf Defence, that it might be ſeen, *as in the caſe of* Samſon, *their Strength this way was departed*, ſo as nothing could avail until ſuch a Work both of Tryal and Judgment, was accompliſhed: This I confeſs hath oft had an affecting Senſe on my own Spirit, and brings a more extraordinary Call therewith, to have

have *our Reliances more abſolutely fixed on God*, and promiſe leſs to our ſelf from viſible means; yea, how to prevent ſuch a Hazard *at the Fountains Head*, as is ſtill threatning, when there may be juſt matter of Fear, *that the date of his Commiſſion is not yet expired.* But 3. Is it not known that this is ſuch an *Adverſary*, over whom the *Engliſh Nation* once had ſo great an *Aſcendent* in times paſt, as they were a Terror unto that People who now does not only keep, but gain Ground againſt the *united Strength of ſo great Confederacy?* ſo that there may be cauſe for a higher Look than to what is *humane*, in the Standing, Supports, and growing Strength of that Party: And it's ſurely one of the *great Demonſtrations of Providence* in the World, which is both in the *riſing and depreſſing of the Genius of a Nation and People*, anſwerable to the Deſigns which God is accompliſhing hereby: But this I leave to the more ſerious Thoughts and Judgments of others, what Appearance ſuch a *Sign* hath to us this day. 4. It is in ſome ſingular way that it may be ſaid the *French* have attained beyond others, to be *united within themſelves*; and on the other hand, no leſs skilful to divide and promote *Diſcords* amongſt thoſe who are againſt them, and

who now in this *critical Juncture* of Affairs, know how to *graft* their deepeſt Deſigns on theſe *inteſtine Diſtempers*, and *Convulſions* which are ſo viſible in the *Politick Body* of theſe Nations; yea, know how to foment the ſame, whilſt *inteſtine Conflicts*, even amongſt the moſt *ſerious part of Proteſtants*, are ſo unceſſant as to ſhut out all fear of this kind, and deſpiſe any moral Relief or Cure. 5. Tho' it may be of ſmall Notice or Remark, upon any threatning Aſpect of ſuch a *Party*, yet I muſt look otherways thereon, even in this Particular, that there has been ſuch a long and reſolute *conforming* amongſt us to *the way of that Nation, in the moſt Prodigious Faſhions and Attires*, who have delighted herein to copy after ſuch a Patern, that they may be at laſt in the Righteouſneſs of God, made to have as ſad a *Tryal* of them in the way of Judgment, as of that *continued Influence and Aſcendent* they have had over them in the way of Sin. 6. But there is one Reflection I muſt yet further offer upon this Head, which in this day hath had a ſpecial Impreſſion on my own Spirit, that the *laſt Effort and* ultimus conatus *of the Kingdom of Antichriſt before its final Fall*, may be feared, is not yet accompliſhed as to the *ultima clades of the Reformed Churches*; yea, that this work hath fallen under his Hand as the Inſtrument waited and fitted by Divine Providence for ſuch an end; which hath oft made me judge, that the *date of his Commiſſion is not yet expired*, when the ſame provoking Cauſes of ſuch a deſolating Stroak as hath

hath been of late on the *Church of* France, are no leſs viſible amongſt us, and may have the ſame Ground to fear, when we ſee ſuch a remarkable *Beacon* in their caſe ſet before us. *The God of the Reformed Churches is no Reſpecter of Perſons and Nations*, who will not ſtill bear with a naked Shew, and an uninlivened Profeſſion of that pure and excellent Religion we enjoy; yea, when the moſt *near and immediate Signs*, which in former times have gone before ſome extraordinary Stroak of Judgment on Nations and Churches, are rather in ſome further Degree, applicable to us: There may be more than ordinary cauſe to meditate Terror on ſuch an account, *that there is a Sound of great Wrath on this Generation, yea, that a Sword is fourbiſhed and ſheathed in Heaven*, which is to have ſome great deſtroying work under its Hand, before it be put up: But oh! nothing is like to do until *ſomething more extraordinary than we have yet ſeen, draw aſide that Veil of Security* we are now under, and hide theſe things from our Eyes. But I ſhall add herewith, as it ſhould be a Bleſſed Surprizal, if the God of Patience might yet ſpare and prolong a Seaſon of Grace, and Reſpite ſo threatning a Woe; ſo on the other hand, an *experimental Knowledge of the Truth of Divine Premunitions*, when it's too late, and is had at ſo dear a Purchaſe, will be very ſad, when no Conviction or Repentance, can regain ſuch a *Seaſon* as we now have, if it be once loſt: But as the Proverb ſpeaks, *non licet in bello aut morte bis errare.*

There is *one thing* yet further now in the *ſhutting up of this Diſcourſe*, which I muſt in a few words touch; that as it is the alone *Prerogative of the Deity to declare things to come, before they ſpring forth*, and who hath bounded the *Proſpect* and Evidence of his People as to *future Events*, or what he is yet bringing forth of his work in the *laſt times*, according to the *extent of Divine Revelation* herein, (ſince this is to be the meaſure of our Light and Diſcoveries, until the *ſecond*

coming of the Lord.) So it's no leſs evident and ſure, that any Pretence or Proſpect of the Events of Providence, which have no Dependance on any *natural cauſes*, is beyond the poſſible reach of *all natural Science*, or of that horrid Profeſſion which is ſo much aloft in theſe times of *judicial Aſtrology*, as it relates to *future and contingent Events*; wherein Men as free Agents do act, when beſides the known Vanity of any ſuch Pretence, the *God of Truth* hath put them in the ſame Claſs with *Sorcerers*, Iſa. 47. 12, 13. *Stand now with the Inchantments, and the multitude of thy Secrets, and let the Aſtrologers and Stargazers, ſtand up and ſave thee.* It is little taken to heart how deep ſuch *real Homage to the Devil*, under a ſplendid ſhew of a *Dependance on natural Cauſes* herein, may draw to a coming under greater Invaſions of his Power, when it's ſo far a giving up with their *Baptiſmal Covenant.* I could ſpeak what hath been with too ſad evidence known of its *Tragick Effects*, but *one Inſtance* leads me now ſpecially to ſpeak thereto; that before this laſt *Tremendous Earthquake at* Jamaica, there was ſo ſtrange and univerſal a Tendence in that Place, to *conſult Aſtrologers in their uſual Undertakings as to the Event*, as did inforce a *ſerious Miniſter of the Goſpel*, who was there a little time before that *Stroak*; not only to *Preach*, and appear againſt ſuch a Contagious Wickedneſs, as that which brings ſome remarkable Judgment with it, but to *Publiſh ſomething in Print* againſt the ſame; which is *here extant:* But they could not thus foreſee their own Deſtiny that was ſo near approching. I might further add a very *ſad Inſtance as to a Perſon who was unqueſtionably of eminent Piety and Parts*, who *by a too eager Curioſity*, was carried to make ſome Tryal of that *Study*, which tended not only to be his Snare, but to moſt *Tragick Effects* in his own Perſonal Lot: Though I forbear to ſpeak more particularly herein, only *that God is a jealous God*, who will not paſs ſome Evils, without a ſevere Remak thereon.

An

An Additional Enquiry on that ſingular Conduct of Providence, which is about the Saints here, and upon ſome of the greateſt Depths thereof, for giving further Light to the foregoing Diſcourſe on that Subject.

I Hope there may be many this day on the Earth, who are indeed on ſo deſirable a *Scent*, and to whom this will be a *Subject* of great Weight, to know the *way of the Lord, and Out-goings of his Providence towards them*, amidſt the various Changes of their Life, and in the more eminent *Periods* and *Stations* thereof: But this proves in another manner, an *exerciſing Subject* in an Hour of great Temptation, to carry the Strength of a Chriſtians Soul thereon, and to penetrate on ſuch Reaſons and Deſigns, that the Majeſty of God hath in more ſtrange and extraordinary Providences, which may for a time, put them in an Amaze when Darkneſs does overſhadow the ſame; ſince for Men thus to be *skilled and diſcerning in his ways*, is ſurely one of the higheſt Attainments of ſpiritual Wiſdom within time. There are two *Myſteries* of Divine Truth to be matter of deep Thoughts and Reflection, the *one is a Chriſtians Conduct and Paſſage through Time*,

Time, the other is his Way and Aſcent to that bleſſed World which is above, at Death; which is by the immediate *Miniſtry* of the *Angels*: But it is ſurely the *firſt* that's moſt marvelous herein, ſince the ſpecial leading and Communion of the *Spirit of God* is ſo Eſſential thereto; yea, the Concurrence of the *whole Glorious Trinity*, and where every Step in that Paſſage is watched by *Infernal Spirits*, whilſt they are beſet with a Body of Death: But this is an Experiment alſo does never fail, that the moſt dark and ſearching Tryals, which may be in ſome unuſual manner meaſured out, do ſtill make way for the greateſt Diſcoveries of Providence, and giving more Light to the *deep things of God* herein.

What I ſhall now ſpeak to, is on ſome *ſpecial Enquiry* for attaining a more clear Light upon this *Subject*; in the *Reſolution whereof*, it will be found how much the *higheſt Aſſiſtance and Support of a Chriſtians Faith* in the Conflicts of their Warfare, when it comes to the moſt trying part thereof, *does lye here*; and for having ſome clear and experimental Acquaintance with the ſame, which is one of the moſt choice Improvements of Grace, that we are called to within time.

1. *En-*

1. *Enquiry* that may be ſuitable here, is to know in what ſpecial manner a Chriſtian is *ſtated*, with reſpect to the *Adminiſtration of Divine Providence* in his Militant Courſe, and how he is intereſſed herein, above the whole reſidue of Men in a moſt ſingular reſpect; for *clearing* of which it is evident,

1. That it is ſure with their immediate entry unto a *new State* by converting Grace, they come then under a *ſpecial Conduct and Care of a watching Providence*, and of the delegate Miniſtry of the *Angels*, which will never ceaſe, no not for one Moment, until the *putting off of their Armour*, and a being carried into the eternal Imbracements of Divine Love.

2. They are in ſuch a manner *ſtated* alſo, under the Interpoſitions of this ſpecial Care and Overſight of *Providence*, as if ſuch a Chriſtian *were alone on the Earth*, and not another, about whom ſo great a Buſineſs and Regard from Heaven is put forth; ſo high is that *Value* which God does put upon one of theſe, who are the immediate Objects of his Complacence and Delight.

3. It is in ſuch a manner he is intereſted herein, as a *Talent* under Truſt of the higheſt Concern, how to be anſwerable thereto

thereto, both by *judicious Obſervation* of what this way paſſeth betwixt God and them, and how their Suits have been returned after much waiting hereon; as alſo for anſwering the ſeveral ends thereof, in their *Improvements* of the ſame.

4. Yea, It is in this reſpect he is *ſtated* under ſo great an Adminiſtration of Providence which is ever about him, as it is *the Seal of Heaven* put to the certainty of Divine Truth, and the Adventures of his Truſt thereon, wherein he can ſee with Joy and Admiration, that he on whom he did *believe and not ſee*, hath in the Iſſue, made him *ſee what he did believe*, to be undoubted and real.

5. He ſtands thus alſo related thereto, in the matter of a *Teſtimony*, and Sanctifying of God before others, upon the account of any remarkable Iſſues of Providence, and to keep the *Remembrance* thereof, up as a part of the moſt valuable Intereſt he hath upon the Earth; when this way one *Hour* in his Life may occurr, that can fully clear the *By-gons*, and Conflicts of many years paſt.

2. *Enquiry* upon this *Subject*, is to know wherein the *Singularity of ſome Steps of Providence*, with reſpect to ſome of the Saints beyond others, do moſt ſpecially

cially appear, when they are directed for ſome eminent Deſign of Grace herewith: For a right underſtanding whereof, we may ſee,

1. What ſtrange and *different Meaſures* the Sovereign God does take in *his refining and trying Work*, about ſome of his People, which he does not with others, as *Iſa.* 45. *Behold I have refined you, but not as Silver*; when it's at a much higher Pitch, that *David* upon his proper Tryal ſpeaks hereof, *Pſal.* 66. *Thou haſt tryed us as Silver is tryed*; which is there ſpoke as the moſt intenſe Degree of Exactneſs in ſuch a Tryal, by a *hotter Furnace*, whilſt herein, ſome eminent Project of Love, hath been found ſtill then in the *Iſſue*.

2. To what an *Extremity* alſo he will ſometime bring ſuch to, in a trying work before it be accompliſhed, ſo as to *kill firſt er'e he make alive*, and render the caſe wholly dependant on a Divine Miraculous Power, as in that *Sickneſs of* Lazarus, and that laſt Conflict of *Davids* at *Ziglag*, which proved the ſoreſt of all, when it was on an immediate turn of Providence, and ſo ſingular an Appearance of God was breaking up herewith.

3. Thus appears in ſo ſtrange a deferring of *Light*, and concealment of the Thoughts and

and Counſel of God towards the choiceſt of his People, that may be ſeen even under ſuch a duration of afflicting Providences, as may be ready to faint and ſtagger their Faith, ſo as no Intreaties, no Tears or Wreſtlings can prevail herein, until they have *ſtayed out their time* wherein they muſt be tryed, as was in the caſe of *Jacob* on *Joſeph's ſuppoſed Death*; who was ſo familiar with God, and yet kept ſo long in the Dark therein, as alſo of *Joſeph* under ſo ſtrange a *Scene*, and *Myſtery of Providence* towards him, *until once the word of the Lord had tryed him.*

4. In his taking ſome of his Followers by a moſt ſignal Conduct of Providence, of all viſible and ordinary means of their Relief; and croſſing all their natural Inclinations and Deſires herein, in an irreſiſtable way, that nothing may interpoſe to darken his more immediate Appearance in the Deliverance.

5. But which may ſeem more aſtoniſhing and ſingular is in ſuch a Conduct of Providence, as is by *Contraries*, and directing of *Means*, that in their natural Tendency, ſeem only deſtructive to ſuch an end; yea, when by a falling down of the greateſt Darkneſs, he brings their caſe to ſome higher *Paroxiſm*, as may have

have all mortal Signs, when yet ſuch Providences do then moſt powerfully work to haſten a comforting Iſſue, above all which had gone before.

6. In an entring of the choiceſt of his People, with a more ſingular *Seal*, and frequenter Confirmations of his Love than at other times, into ſome extraordinary Courſe and *Series* of trying Conflicts, which have been as the falling down of a dark and *long Night*, immediately following ſo great a Brightneſs; yea, thus alſo by ſuch a Conſtraint of Providence, leading them into the ſame, as *David* ſpeaks *Pſal. 66. Thou broughteſt us in the Net, and laidſt Affliction on our Loins*, &c. and as the *Diſciples of Chriſt* were conſtrained to go to the *Sea*, when a Storm was to follow thereon.

7. When in following the moſt expreſs and clear Call to ſome ſpecial Service and Acts of Duty, there occurrs greateſt Oppoſitions, and croſs Providences thereto, as was in *Paul*'s Voyage to *Rome*, when his *Commiſſion* from Heaven herein was given, under ſo great a *Seal* and Evidence; And nothing did ſhake *Jeremiah*'s Faith more, than that ſtrange and growing *Tide* of Oppoſition, which was ſtill in the way of his Work, when his Call herein was ſo clear

and

and extraordinary, as put him to ſpeak thus unto God, *Chap.* 20. 7. *Thou haſt perſwaded me, and I was perſwaded,* &c. when he was almoſt overpowered by the Enmity and Violence of Men in his work.

8. In that ſtrange length, to which a *deferred hope* may be continued before its Enjoyment, even where the Earneſt, and Confirmations thereof, have been in ſome unuſual way made evident, until it ſeem'd wholly deſperate, and beyond hope; yea, when under ſuch a *Delay* they have been expoſed to all kind of Temptations, which in the Nature thereof, as well as Duration, ſeem'd to contradict the ſame, and give it the Lie.

9. By ſuch a Concurrence alſo in ſome part of a Chriſtians Warfare, as at the ſame time *there may be Fightings without, and Fears within, as the Apoſtle* ſpeaks, ſuch as may render it a ſtrange Myſtery to others, when yet there is nothing *penal* herein; yea, when this may be for a time, wholly in the dark to them, until that Deſign of Grace appear for their being trained thus by leſſer Conflicts for ſuch a *time* in their Life, wherein uſually *Satans greateſt Effort* lyes againſt them, and the higheſt *Probation* of their Grace, which God hath deſign'd to take whilſt they are on the Earth.

10. I

10. I shall but add on *this Head*, that as the Lord hath designed something in his way towards each Christian, that's peculiar to them alone, so is that *Variation in the Methods of Providence* about such, remarkable, whilst some have their most choice and comforting times *first*, as was *Solomons, and his last days the worst*, whilst the *latter days of* Job *were his best*. But there is also some Singularity in the Tryals of the Saints, which it's sure will never be reiterated, either in the *Kind or Measure*; such as in *Abraham's being tryed in his Faith, upon the offering of* Isaac; the Intent thereof being purely *Typical*: And it may be judged that *Job* was given for an *Example*, to have a Room only proper to himself, until the Church ceased to be Militant.

A 3*d. Enquiry which is of great Concern on such a Subject, lyes* here, in what respects it may be said that *the light and comforting side of some very dark and astonishing Providences is gained*, which had held such under greatest Fears and Suspence formerly; so as they can now *keep Sight of the way of the Lord* towards them herein: It's true, this is not attained in the way of *Light* only, but of *Power*; and one day may fall in to raise the Tryal of a

Chriſtian, more than many Years paſt have done; when the *Night* may be both dark and long, without either *Moon* or *Stars* then appearing, before there be any Day-break: Yet may ſuch a rare *Injoyment* in a ſpecial way thus be underſtood, when there is ſome clear breaking up of Light herein upon theſe *things*.

1. How congruous ſuch *Steps* in the Spotleſs way of God, that ſeemed to have ſo diſmal an Aſpect, are to the *Excellencies of his Nature*, to the *Teſtimonies and ſetled Conſtitutions of his Word*, and to theſe uſual *Methods*, which he hath taken with his greateſt Favourites, in caſes of *Tryal* of the ſame Nature, and under, as trying Circumſtances.

2. When they can thus ſee how great a *Deſign* it is, which the Holy God hath on the hotteſt Conflicts of his Peoples Warfare, and in redoubling their Aſſaults, and that it is more than on the higheſt *civil Intereſt of Kingdoms and Nations*: And how intenſely his Eyes are fixed on what part his People does then Act, wherein the *Honour of his own Grace*, and their *Victory* over the Infernal World, does ſo much lye.

3. How there is ſurely an appointed Meaſure, which the *Work and Tryal of Faith* hath to be

be filled up, not only with respect to the personal case of Christians, but to the *State of the Church Militant, from the entry, to the close of time*; which hath still a growing Increase, wherein each of the Saints hath *some proper Interest* that is allotted to him, for perfecting of the same.

4. When they can also discern by what a special *overruling Providence*, the Lord hath usually bequeathed the choicest Mercies, and prevented great Hazards in such a way, as was most grieving and contrary to their Thoughts in the present time; and hath ever reserved *the most rare Experiments and Tryals of himself*, to the most trying times of his Peoples Lot, when their Support was beyond the Possibility of Nature.

5. When they can see what a *Foord* and strange Passage others have been taken through, in extraordinary cases, by that alone way of *Reliance on an invisible God*; which could have no Rise from ordinary or *natural Causes*; and how sweet a Remembrance such Providences have thus transmitted to the After-times of a Christians Life, to witness that no *Joy* or *Comfort* on this Earth, is comparable to that which *hath followed the deepest Agonies and Down-castings.*

6. When there is ſome clear breaking up of *Light* upon the *Deſign* and *deep reaches of Providence*, which are in the moſt ſtrange Methods thereof, to promote the Intereſt and Service of *many*, by the *perſonal Conflicts* of ſome of his People; yea, for their being thus made a more *publick Bleſſing* to the time they live in, by *Example*, and their ſpecial Improvement of the ſame; ſince for this end, more ſingular caſes of Tryal, are uſually allotted by the Conduct of Divine Wiſdom, in order to *Services* that ſuch are deſign'd for, beyond others.

7. When it's evident both from *Scripture Light and Obſervation*, how no *notable Mercies* and *Enjoyments of Divine Reſpect*, have ever been attained, without ſomething no leſs remarkable in the proving of their *Patience* and *Faith*, which hath gone before: Yea, in how ſtrange a manner the Lord hath then choſen, to *hide his Work for a time*, and *ſhut up their way*, that the *Returns of Light* after the ſame, might be more ſweet and diſcernable.

8. How it's unalterably fixed by the ſtanding *Laws of Heaven*, that the *Teſtimony of God in his revealed Truth*, muſt firſt be the *Object of his Peoples Truſt* and *Expectation*, e're it be made the *Object of their*

their Senſe and Enjoyment in its *Performance*; and that it's an *inviolable Connexion* which lyes in ſuch a Method as is ſaid of *Abraham*, Heb. 6. 15. *That after he had patiently endured, he obtained the Promiſe*; ſo as they can thus ſee how ſignal a part this hath *in the great Frame of Providence*, when *a long Term of enduring in Hope*, and under greateſt Conflicts, goes before the Return and Enjoyment of the ſame.

9. How clear it's alſo in the way and *order of Grace*, that God will firſt have a ſore Trouble, and depths of Affliction to be deeply *exerciſing and humbling*, before it be made *Comforting*; but with ſuch Advantage thereby, that theſe will be leaſt *broke* by their Conflicts, who have been moſt *bruiſed* and *bowed down* by *humbling Exerciſe* and Work herein; this being ever ſure, that his great Power will never be imployed *to ruin*, but *to raiſe*, and *revive* the Spirits of ſuch.

10. When they ſee alſo theſe tender Methods of Divine Providence, as are made uſe of in the training of Chriſtians by *leſſer Eſſays* of Tryal, with ſome *lucid Intervals* betwixt one Degree, and another thereof, before the Lord bring forth his *Deſign* upon ſome *more ſolemn and extraordinary Tryal*, which ſhould have o-

therwiſe cruſh'd and overſet their Spirits, if it had not been thus *gradually* brought on.

11. But in this reſpect moſt ſpecially it may be ſaid, the *light ſide of the moſt dark and aſtoniſhing Providence, is turned* towards a Chriſtian, when he can diſcern and prove his way towards God, with ſuch an humble *Reference* as that, *Job* 23. 10. *But thou knoweſt the way that I take*: And when it's thus made evident in the *hid Actings of Grace* and that *Prevalency* it then hath to keep cloſe with God under the greateſt Temptations; in their Applications alſo, and Retirements of their Soul with him, where they can have no Witneſs but himſelf, *who ſees in ſecret, that he may reward openly*; when it's evident likewiſe in their *Deſigns*, and being acted from *internal Motives* herein, to have *another Service for God*, than ſuch as ſtand with him upon the *Wages of the Hireling*; yea, can *prove their way* in a *Counter-motion to ſuch Evils, that are moſt Contagious and Exemplary in the times* wherein they are; ſo as thus, *to ſave themſelves from ſuch an untoward Generation*: When alſo their Work hath not only been to prove their *State* by ſure Evidence, but to know of what *manner of Spirit*

Spirit they were in ſuch a caſe towards Men, and theſe who might have had the greateſt Influence on their Trouble and Grief.

But there is yet a 4*th. Enquiry*, of higheſt Conſequence in order to Light herein, to know *where the Life and Comfort of a Chriſtians Confidence in an Hour of Temptation does lye*, and what hath the *neareſt and moſt immediate Influence on the comforting Work of Faith*, not only in caſes of *perſonal Tryal*, which may be moſt ſearching, but under any *Surprizal of publick Judgment*, that may be on a nearer Approach than ſeems apprehended by moſt. It's true, it's Honourable for God, both to *try* his People above the Power and Support of Nature, and to *bear them up herein*, in the View of the World: But as on the *one Hand* it ſeems aſtoniſhing, what Providences may occurr to ſome of the Saints of that Nature, as are amongſt the *Arcana of the Divine Government*, ſo is it no leſs wonderful on the *other Hand*, what he hath afforded to be *aſſiſtant* thereto, which lye not in the Reverence of the World, but are a Secret betwixt God and the Souls of his People; who hath not left them in the Dark, as to the *hid Spring of their Supplies. This I muſt improve*

further here, though it be a little touched in the *foregoing Diſcourſe*, in theſe *reſpects*.

1. That there is ſurely then ſuch an undoubted Aſſiſtance, as *an immediate Communion with the Spirit of God*, in Addreſſes to Heaven *by Prayer*, when no viſible things can be comforting, ſuch as goes above the *Support of Miracles*, *or Miniſtry of the Angels*, though this be not comprehenſible by the Spirit of the World; which can in a Moment raiſe the Soul above its *greateſt Fears*, when there is no cauſe by Humane Senſe herein; and affords alſo one of the higheſt *Demonſtrations of the Chriſtian Faith*.

2. That there is herewith *ſuch* an Enjoyment attainable, as an *ineffable Senſe and Evidence of Divine Love*, *ſhed abroad on the Soul by the Holy Ghoſt*, which goes above any *external Providences* for this end; and does efficaciouſly work, when no *Light*, no *former Experience*, nor *habitual Grace* can ſtemm the the Tide of ſome extraordinary Afflictions.

3. Yea, There is alſo ſuch a *Support* to be known then, as *the ſenſible and immediate Preſence of the Comforter in his reviving Power*, *and their Fellowſhip with him*, which no *local diſtance* can poſſibly obſtruct in ſuch an Hour, when

when their Releaſe muſt either come out of Heaven, or utterly fail. *Theſe are indeed great things*, which cannot be believed and not admired, that have thus the *neareſt Influence on the Joy and Peace of Believing*, ſuch as are no *abſtract Notions*, but the *greateſt Realities* within time.

4. There is the comfort of ſuch *Divine Promiſes*, *which by ſome ſpecial Application of that Seal of the Spirit of Promiſe*, hath been formerly known, will in a dark and ſad Hour, afford a moſt ſingular Aſſiſtance: But it's no *Contemplation* can ſpeak the *Power of that Evidence* which hath accompanied the ſame, when in an *obſignatory way* this is given unto the Soul, or the great *Improvement* that hath been made hereof, when all viſible Refuges are failed.

5. There is likewiſe the *Support of Sanctuary Strength*, that's in a moſt peculiar way deſign'd of the Lord, for a Supply in the moſt overwhelming caſe; when by *the publick Ordinances of the Goſpel* (where ſuch a Door is kept open) and under the *Bleſſing of that Inſtitution*, ſuch hid and immediate Conveyances of Power have been then experienced, as hath made them return with Admiration upon the directing of Truths to their preſent caſe, when nothing could be more *ſeaſonable*; yea, hath been

been ſo evident a return oft to ſome humble Reference and *Enquiry in the Temple* herein, as if it had been by a *Voice from Heaven*, both in the Light and Power thereof.

6. There is the Improvement of *former Experience of ancient Friendſhip and Love betwixt God and their Soul*, which in the ſadeſt Hour, is of a ſingular uſe; as alſo of *Providences which have been more extraordinary in their Life paſt*; ſince it's thus *Experience worketh Hope*, not only upon our reaſoning from the ſame, but in the way of an eſtabliſh'd Mean and *Ordinance* for this end, by that *indiſſoluble Connexion*, which God hath fixed betwixt them.

7. Nor is it *perſonal Experience* only, (though that takes the deepeſt Impreſſion on Mens Soul) but the Improvement of ſuch eminent Acts of Providence, as have been moſt diſcernable *in the caſe of others*, under their greateſt Exigencies, and under ſome obſervable *Seal* of Gods immediate Appearance therein; ſince there is a *publick Intereſt* that the reſidue of the Saints have in the ſame, for ſtrengthening of their Faith, as well as theſe who are moſt immediately concerned herein; to make ſome *new Acceſſion to the Churches Treaſure*, when the Iſſue of ſome reſolute and great

great *Adventures of Truſt and Reliance on God*, hath been made clear and conſpicuous to the World.

8. There is likewiſe that *rare Aſſiſtance to a Chriſtians Faith*, and its comforting Work in the ſaddeſt Hour, which is ever then found in the *actings of Love*, and fervent *Emotions* thereof *to him*, who is the Determiner of their Lot; ſince it's proper to *Love*, *that it thinks no Evil*, but hath ſtill Honourable Thoughts of God, even under the moſt diſmal Appearances of Providence; and is thus watchful, that nothing ſhould eſtrange or *ſeparate betwixt them and the Love of Chriſt*, whoſe ſevereſt Act of Smiting, *is to heal*, and is ever *ſaving*: And where this *Love* is in Exerciſe, it hath ſuch a piercing Intelligence with its *Bleſſed Head*, as to diſcern *his Heart*, *and the ſounding of his Bowels towards them*, even when his Hand would ſeem to deſtroy; which renders the *way of Truſt* ſo ſweet and delightful, that *if this way could fail*, *they ſhould make no other Choice.*

9. Yea, There is to be known then, how the *comfort of Hope* does work upon their being in the Iſſue made *Overcomers*, when the *Triumph* ſhall be proportioned to the Meaſure and Greatneſs of theſe *Conflicts*, which have been in their way; and

and that it's ſo near when this ſhall be made the *Object of their Senſe*, which is now ſuch a *Wonder to their Faith*; and that even in this *Militant State* on the Earth, they ſtand in Right, *as a Part of the Church Triumphant*, who are inſert as *Members thereof*, *on the Records of Heaven*; and tho' they be not yet in *Poſſeſſion*, yet have a proper Room ſecured them in theſe Regions of Glory, who may have no *Title*, or comforting Intereſt now in this World: And how ſhort a View are we to take of the things of Time, whilſt *that other World*, in both the States thereof, is each day filling up, with a growing and new Increaſe?

Let me *add* this further, that as each obſerving Chriſtian ſhould have ſome *Record and Hiſtory of himſelf*, both as to what hath been moſt remarkable in the *ways of God* towards them, and of their *Deſigns and Improvements of Grace*, which in any meaſure they have attained: So is it not expreſſible, what an Intereſt this makes as a helper to their Joy, when there may be a ſurrounding of them otherwiſe, with matter of *Heavineſs under manifold Temptations*. It is by this *ſhort View* which is now offered of *Aſſiſtance*, that have the *moſt immediate and prevalent Influence on a comforting Reliance and Adventuring on God*, though

though Tryals ſhould be at the greateſt height, may let us ſee what an Advantage ſuch have above theſe who ſeem to have the moſt Support and Security from *viſible things*; yea, we know little how near ſuch a day may be to theſe, who now are at eaſe, when no Comfort or Relief ſhall be found in another way: And oh! that Men would in the way of Reaſon, inquire more deeply about the Truth hereof, and what they will do when Humane Confidences are blaſted, if they have no Intereſt in ſuch a Support.

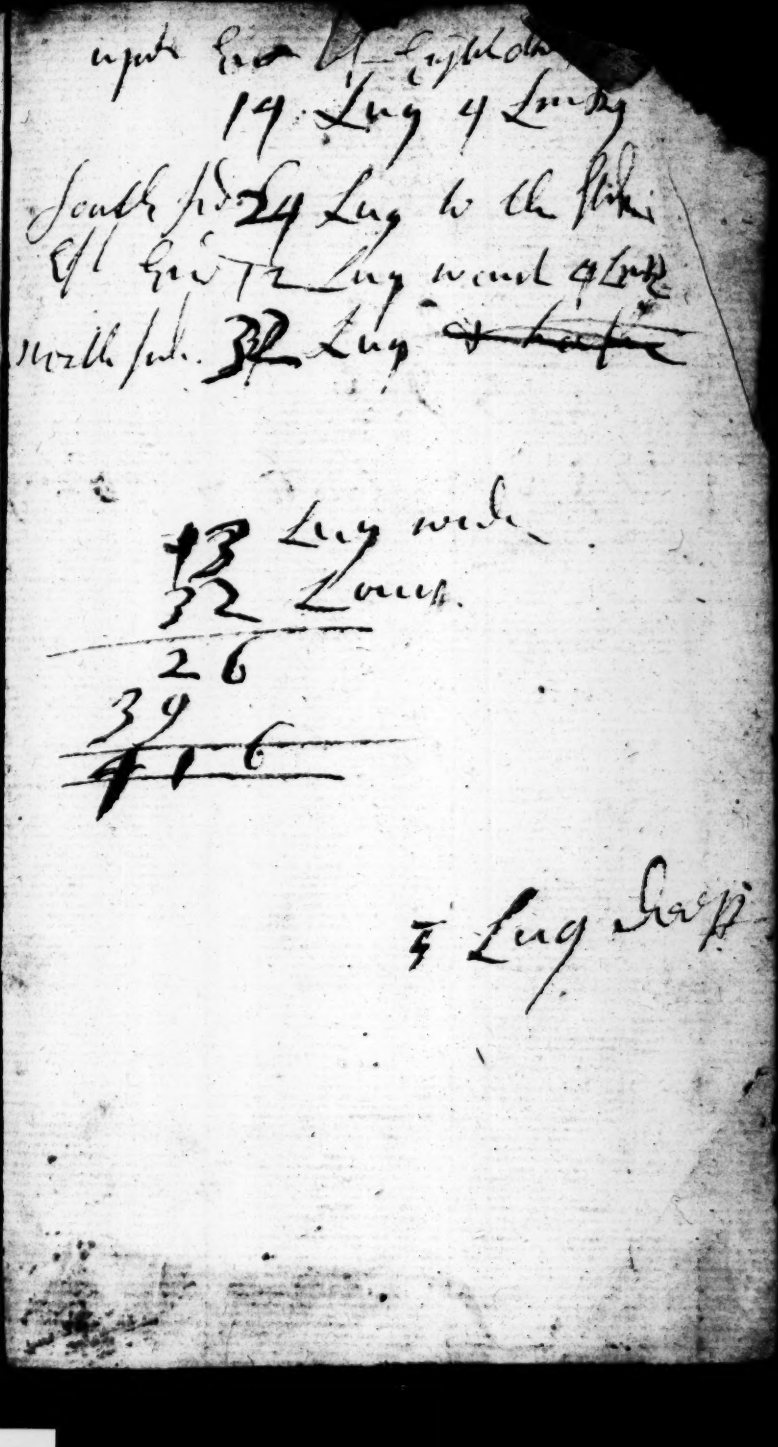
I ſhould have entred on a 5*th. Enquiry* about the *preſent Appearances of the time* we are in, but having both in the *foregoing Diſcourſe, and another Piece lately Publiſhed*, ſpoke at ſome Length thereto, as to what may be juſt *Grounds of Fear*, and for *Confidence and Hopes*; I ſhall forbear to add further on that Head; but whatever Regard may be to the ſame, which I muſt ſay, hath a directing *Call* in a ſpecial way to theſe, who are in the *higheſt Station and Power, this day in* Britain; I can with humble Confidence ſpeak that what is there offered to be awakening to us as matter of Fear, when ſuch unuſual Grounds are for the ſame, was under the Dread and *Fear of that God*, to whom

whom I muſt e're long give an Account of the Commiſſion I have received, as a *Watchman* to his Church; yea, with ſuch inward Quiet and Aſſurance of Mind herein, as if the *Cloſe of this Diſcourſe*, ſhould be the laſt of my Work and Service within time; though ſomething may poſſibly ſeem ſtrange of what hath been offered on ſuch an Account: But I hope therein will be found nothing which may not be convincing to any of a ſerious and conſiderate Spirit in the way of ſolid Reaſon and was for this *Intent* deſigned, that by our *anſwering to the Call and Warnings of God*, which have been very extraordinary and evident in our day, there might be yet a *meeting him whilſt he is in the way*, to prevent threatned Judgment, which tarrieth not for Man, nor is dependent on viſible things, when the *time* thereof, is once come: Only I muſt *ſhut up* this *with Two ſerious Reflections on the preſent Juncture of things*, as may be too Obvious. 1. That it's now ſome *Years paſt*, ſince an unuſual and conſpicuous *Signal of Judgment* hath been given, not only to *theſe Nations*, but to the *whole Reformed Churches*, in that aſtoniſhing Stroak, and Devaſtation of the *Church of* France, where hath been a plucking up of what was ſo eminently

nently planted there, and caſting down of what was built, ſo as *for a time, the Candleſtick is removed thence*: This I muſt confeſs hath had to me, a more ſad and affrighting *Aſpect*, that the Correſpondence which is this day in the *Publick State of the Reformed Churches*, does ſo evidently in as high a Prevalence of Sin, and of waſting Diſtempers, (if not in a higher Degree) than could be than charged on that *Church*. 2. That when the Holy God ſets up ſo great and eminent a *Beacon* as ſuch a *Ruin* is this day in our ſight, he does uſually for ſome time, allow it to be *Warning and Awakening* to other Places for whom it is deſign'd; and herein as to this *Inſtance*, hath he graciouſly held his Hand, that the *Outcaſt* of his People there, might have both a Retreat and Relief in *other Churches*; but oh! when the Intent of ſuch an *aſtoniſhing Beacon* is not anſwered, and ceaſeth to be affecting to our Spirits as at the firſt, I muſt refer it to the Thoughts and Enquiry of others, whether *the Deſign of ſuch a Rod* as hath been there raiſed and made uſe of for *Judgment and breaking down*, as well as *Tryal*, be yet ſiſted, and hath no further Work for the ſame Intereſt and Vindication of the Glory of God,

God, as to other of the *Churches*; or if there be no cauſe now to fear that the *Dregs of ſuch a Cup is not yet wrung out?* which may be feared to be more ſevere at laſt, than what was in the firſt part thereof, if Grace do not in a ſingular way, interpoſe: And it is on that Account my Heart cannot but meditate Terror this Day.

FINIS.



upon [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

14 Lug 4 Lunks

South side 24 Lug to the [illegible]

East side 72 Lug wand 4 Lunks

North side 32 Lug ~~[illegible]~~

13 Lug wide

32 Lunks

26

39

~~416~~

4 Lug deep